
Priest-Craft,
ITS
CHARACTER
AND
CONSEQUENCES.



C. H. A. R. C. T. E. R.

A. M. D.

C. O. N. S. E. Q. U. E. N. C. E.

Priest-Craft,
ITS
CHARACTER
AND
CONSEQUENCES.

By EDMUND HICKERINGILL,
Rector of *All-Saints in Colchester.*

The Third Edition.

L O N D O N,
Printed; and are to be Sold by B. Bragge,
at the *Blue-Ball* in *Ave-Mary-Lane.*

Printed at the

178

CHAMBERLAIN



CONSTITUTION

BY EDMUND NICKERSON

Rector of All-Saints in Colchester

Printed in London.

LONDON

Printed, and are to be sold, by
the Black-Box in the Strand.

Priest-Craft,

ITS

CHARACTER

AND

CONSEQUENCES.

PRIEST-CRAFT is the *Plague* of all Religions (whether true or false, 'tis all one for that) but it is most odious, (because most fatal and mischievous) to the *True Religion*.

The *True Religion* is *Christned* by the Name of *Orthodox*; but Wise Men are very apt to believe that, (though all Religions pretend a Right to that *Good Name*, yet not one of a hundred but do nick-name it; falsely calling, or *miscalling* (what is only their own silly Conceits, Fancies, and Opinions) *True and Orthodox Religion*; which all Men pretend to *Court*, but few *Esponse*.

Orthodox! Oh Orthodox! an honest *Greek Word*, but in plain *English*, it is usually nothing else but *Money, Money*, or, in the Language of the Highway-Men upon the Road towards Heaven —deliver your Purse; or die and be damn'd— and the Devil rake him, by Excommunication, and soon after ——— Take him Jaylor, that is, 'till he Repent, which is never any Remedy, except he pay, *Money, Money*.

The *False Religion* is called by *St. Paul* (at *Athens*) *Superstition*, or a Divine-Worship that God never made, but is only the Inventions of *Crafty-Cheats* or *Priest-Craft*.

A

Which

Which consists in one thing especially, namely, That when the crafty Priest's Avarice has conceiv'd, and his Ambition brought forth the Maggots of his own Brain, (or the bastard brood of his own Inventions) most confidently, or rather impudently (to Legitimate his spurious Brats) makes *God* to be the Father of them, and the *Godfather* too, to give them the name of Divinity, or Orthodoxy *Jure divino*.

Thus the *first* High Priest (that vagabond Rogue) murder'd his good Brother, because he was a Non-conformist or a Dissenter; and would not, or could not (in Conscience) conform to *Cain's* Opinion in Religion; his own Inventions.

The Priests of all Sects and Religions (true or false, good or bad 'tis all one for that too) have *but one note* (even the same with the Hypocritical Jewish Priests, that cry'd) *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord* are these: or, *the Church, the Church*; pretending to know Almighty God, and be better acquainted with Him, and nearer related to Him than other Folks; as being (forsooth) the *Favourites* of the Court (of Heaven.) And if ye dare be so impudent as not believe All that they say to be Gospel, (of which notwithstanding they themselves, perhaps, believe not one Jot) then they proclaim you to be Rebels to God, *Horn* you, as in *Scotland*, Excommunicate you, Curse you, Damn you, and bid the Devil take you, as aforesaid, and then—soon after.—Take him Jaylor. How now? will some say! why? what are you.

I answer, negatively, I am no bloody *Cain*, nor *Persecuting*-Priest, but, I write what follows for the good of all Mankind, and the advancement of true Religion; which many Christian-Priests have so defac'd, by making void the great Laws of God, and Nature, and of right Reason, *viz.* Charity, Humility, Meekness, Temperance, Justice, Patience, and Forbearance; all which are extinguish'd to make room for their own Traditions and Inventions to maintain their Pride, Cruelty, Avarice, and Revenge.

And who more fit to unkennel the Fox than the honest Tarrier that is a part of him.

Not that I am ignorant, that it is as dangerous to handle Priestcraft as to rake in a Nest of Wasps; for, evil and enraged Priests, (like Cowards and Women) never give Quarter when they get their Enemy at advantage; they have no Grace nor Mercy in them. And

And I foresee that they will call me (for this my Love to them and Mankind,) the *Great Turk*, the *Great Jew*, or the *Great Atheist*, and by invented Lies, (with which the Father of Lies is always at their Elbow to prompt them) inveigh against me; especially if I meddle (in this Character of Priest-craft) with their *Diana*, or the Craft by which they get their Wealth.

For this Cause all the great City of *Ephesus* was in an Uproar, (says the Text) and the *Mob* was rais'd against *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as a couple of Atheists; for daring to say, That *they were no Gods which are made with hands*: That was the plausible pretence; but the true Reason of the Malice of those Silver-smiths was, that thereby *the hopes of their Gain was gone*.

But let them Rail, Belye, and Curse and Damn me, I am, by God's good Providence, plac'd far above the stormy *Atmosphere*, and middle Region of devilish and malicious Blasts; I am secure and serene, and out of the reach of their Spleen; I have no Fears, no Needs, Desires of any thing that lawful Authority can either give or take away; and peradventure so fitted and accounted by Providence for the very nonce, in so bold and dangerous a Province as this that I am going about to manage; and *old Age*, that has so long been my *Memento Mori*, secures me from the Fears of Death, and lying Slanders and Defamations; Good Report and Evil Report (*do not wonder*) is all alike to me.

All Priest-craft makes loud pretences to Truth, and to know God, and be better acquainted (than others) with Heaven; where yet they never were, and do but guess at; for, like *St. John*, (we know not) what we shall be; or, like *St. Paul*, we see but with Spectacles; or (in a Glass) darkly.

But *St. John* and *St. Paul* had then seen the Lord Christ; and *St. Paul* had been in Heaven, if it were not a meer Dream; for he himself could not tell then, whether he was in the Body, (alive) or out of the Body, (dead;) and heard unutterable Words; but what Language they spake in Heaven, he says, he did not think lawful to tell; yet the Popish Priests, especially their High-Priest (the Pope,) has, if he do not Lye, *all power in Heaven and on Earth*, (*Ecchoing*) the words of our blessed Saviour,) and in Purgatory and Hell too; as our Redeemer when he descended into Hell to preach (before his Resurrection) to the Spirits in Prison there; and, without Controversie, he did not go so far

to preach and labour in vain, but brought with him from thence many Prisoners and Captives.

So can the *Pope* (he says) Redeem not only Souls, but (such as our Redeemer never pretended thence to deliver) even the Devils themselves. But the blessed *Jesus* took not upon him the Nature of Angels, and therefore never pretended to be an Advocate for the Devil, or fallen Angels. And as for Purgatory, it is the *Pope's* and the *Priest's* best Glebe, their peculiar Benefice and Appropriation; 'tis better to them than the *Indies* to the *Spaniards*, or the *Philosopher's Stone* to *Chymists*.

For Popery is a pleasant *Farce*, composed by *Priest-Craft*, and the Actors, *Priests*; who arraying themselves in their Ecclesiastical Wardrobe or Vestries, Lobby's or Tiring-Room, mount the Stage with great *Huzzah's* and Applause of the unthinking *Mob*, and in their *Magpye-Dress*, sportive (because Ridiculous) Habits, telling Stories (their own Inventions, meer Fancies and Traditions, to support the Reverence to *Priest-Craft*, from Generation to Generation) all the while making Faces, with Eyes turn'd up, and Hands stretch'd out to Heaven, and such *Pinkethman* Grimaces, that the gull'd Lay-Auditory are very well pleas'd, and content (rather than not see the Play) to have their Pockets pick'd by their wily *Cant*.

Of which the cunning *Gypsies* (themselves) believe not one word to be true, yet their willing Hearers, that come to have their Fortunes told, and what shall become of them in this and the other World, believe it as they do the Gospel, and are ready to swear to the Truth of all that the *Priest* says, (as confidently) as to their Bibles; tho' why, or wherefore they believe either the *Priest-Craft Sermon*, or the *Bible*, more than the *Alcoran*, they cannot give you so much as one good Reason, either like Rational Men or Christians.

If Men now a days were not greedy to swallow any thing that comes from the Pulpit without chewing, can they be so sortish as to believe that Religion (whether good or bad, true or false) can be any Support to Government; yet nevertheless it is a Maxim commonly received, not only by *Priest-ridden* (but also by unthinking) Politicians.

Without Controversie, true Religion is no Support to Government; for where true Religion is, God Governs by his Grace and holy

holy Spirit, guiding them into all Truth and Virtues, Charity, Faith, Hope, Justice, Meekness, Obedience to God, and to the Magistrate, the Minister of God, needing no Acts of Parliament, Acts of Uniformity, nor Conformity: But *Superstition* or *Priest-Craft*, (which when the Cheat by wise Men is discovered, makes too many Converts to *Deism* and *Atheism*) cannot be supported without Acts of Parliament, Constables, and Constable-staves, Hangmen, Warrants, Bumbayliffs, Jaylors and Jayls; (a pretty Tribe to make Pillars of to support Christ's Church.) Let us pray: — Good Lord deliver us from them and the Devil.

Our blessed Saviour, when here upon Earth, by his Prophetical Office foresaw what Blood and Wounds, Ruin and Desolation would vex the World, by his coming into it, and planting in it the Christian Religion.

And yet his Gospel is called the Gospel of Peace, and he himself, the Prince of Peace, nay, Peace its self.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding all this, if any Man imagine that our Saviour's coming into the World, should the better support the Government of the World, or promote Peace, the main (if not the *only*) End and Design of all good Government; he himself answer'd the vain Imagination, and Political or Priest-ridden Dream, saying, Do not mistake your selves, or do you think I came into the World to send Peace on Earth; I tell you nay, but rather Division, or Schism.

And in another place, he would have his Disciples to believe and give Credit to his Words, namely, That he came not to send Peace on Earth, but a Sword; Father against Son, and Son against Father, Mother, and Daughter, all together by the Ears, Tooth and Nail, Swords and Daggers, Jayling, Murdering, and cutting one anothers Throats, to the end of the Chapter; and all for God's sake, and Christ's sake, if they do not lye.

The Fire in the Pope's Kitchen, would burn with no greater blaze than *mine*, were it not for his *Material* Fire of Purgatory: But how *Immaterial* Souls should fry there, or how a *Material* Fire can possibly work upon or affect an *Immaterial* Spirit or Soul, has puzzled and nonplust all Philosophers to resolve.

For *Angels* (*good and bad*, 'tis all one for that) whether in Heaven, or *Devils* in Hell, and *Souls* (*good and bad*) 'tis all one for that are (as we are taught, and do commonly believe) *Immaterial*

terial Substances; for if they be not *Immaterial*; (and consequently not compounded of corruptible Matter, and Ingredients that time crumbles and destroys,) they could not be *Immortal*: So we will take it for granted, take it upon trust and by content, that they are *Immaterial*.

Well then, the *Immaterial* and *Immortal* Souls, Angels, Spirits, and Devils, (Ten Hundred Thousand Millions of them, may all sit together upon the point of the least Needle that ever was made and yet leave room enough upon the Needle's point for as many Millions more to sit: For *Immaterial* Beings (as is that of Almighty God) cannot possibly fill any place: No; for even Priest-Craft does consent, that it is impossible for any *Immaterial* Beings to fill or take up any place or space; they have no *Locus*, (as they Cant) but only an *Ibi*; that is, they are somewhere and no where: They are somewhere, but where they cannot say. But not to fall out or offend them, we will grant them that the Wheel is true, and the Nonsense, good Sense, and very fit for Rational Men, and Men of Sense to give credit unto and make it an Article of their Faith.

Yet notwithstanding Priest-craft must be puzzled, nonplus'd, and at a loss, to answer these following Queries, viz.

Query 1. If Purgatory be the Pope's Glebe, how did he Purchase it, or come honestly by it?

For all their own Historians say, that many of their Popes have been not only Accused but Condemned by their own General Councils, for Adultery, nay, (worse) Sodomy, Simony, Sorcery, Witchcraft, Arianism, and Atheism. How the Devil then came they by this same profitable Mine, or Mint, call'd *Purgatory*?

Query 2. Grant that he and his Popelings have such an Inheritance as Purgatory to dispose of and domineer in, has not the Pope, and his crafty Priests, (tho' they may perhaps, have cunning Heads, yet have they not) hard Hearts, to let Souls fry and lie tormented there, when they can (if they do not lye) give them Deliverance, a Pass-port for Heaven, with one Word speaking?

Faith, Hope, and Charity, (these three) but the greatest of these is Charity; and if this be true, then, Thirdly, I Query,

Query

Query 3. How can the Pope, and all his Popelings, and General Councils (of crafty Priests) be infallible in their Faith, when in that which is better than Faith, (*viz.* Charity) they are fallible, and fail.

For Souls may lie and fry in Purgatory, if not for ever, yet at least till the general Jubilee, if neither the rich Curmudgeon, (on his Death Bed) nor his more pious Bigot, his Executor, do not open his Purse wide, wide, and pay Holy Church for Praying so many Masses, so many *Shillings* (in *England*) not a Farthing cheaper.

To redeem a Soul out of *Purgatory*, the Market-price varies as does the Bank-Stock, higher or lower, in several Countries, and in several Seasons, as best pleases Priest craft, those spiritual Stock Jobbers.

I write nothing herein at Random, by Guess, or by Hear-say, or out of Malice or Contempt, but experimentally, and of my own certain Knowledge: when I was in *Spain* and *Portugal* (which is above Forty Years ago) I could have had a Friend's Soul fetch'd out of Purgatory for 25 *l.* *Sterling*, namely, a Thousand Masses at 6 *d.* a piece, which would then---: And the Price now (*England*) is still the same, and not to be had under 50 *l.* (that is) 12 *d.*—a Mass, they will not bate a Farthing, (hard Hearts.)

Truth (its self) says, that it is almost impossible for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; How will the Rich Pope get thither then? *St. Peter* might, for he said, (and said truly) *Silver and Gold have I none*: Do not the Popes then tell a curled Lye when they call the Great and Rich City of *Rome* *St. Peter's Patrimony*; and not only *Rome*, but all *Romania*, *Bolognia*, *Ferrara*, and many other Territories, not only in *Italy*, but all the World over, *St. Peter's Patrimony*, a Rich *Dives* no doubt:: particularly *England*, given to the Pope by (extorted by Priest-craft from) *King John*; and *Ireland*, bequeathen to him by *Oneal*, or *Tryconnel*, on their Death Beds.

For the Pope like the Devil, says) in the very words of the Devil) *All the Kingdoms of the Earth are mine, and I give them to whomsoever I will*; but I give them to none but such as kiss mine——my Cloven-Foot, my Toe.

Does *Holy Writ* say, that it is almost impossible for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Priest craft says quite con-

contrary, It is impossible for a Rich Man not to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; if he or his Executor (with dissembled Tears) do but divide their Goods (got by Rapine, Cheating, Perjury, and Murder) to Holy Church when they die; or, as the Whores in *Venice*, go snips with the *States of Venice*, giving them *Half-Pay* for Licences to play the Whore, and the Priest gets *half of the other half*, for a *Passport to Heaven*, when they die, and escaping, or not calling at *Purgatory* by the Way, and on the Road Heavenwards; so that the poor *Courtezans* in *Venice* have worse Trading by half than here in *England*.

I have often wondred why so many great *English* Whores turn'd *Papists* in the late Reigns, knowing how hard Priest-Craft bears upon them, in putting the Jades to this melancholy choice, either to share part of their Gettings with Holy Church or be damn'd: A hard Saying and Dilemma. For, in truth, *England* has been such an inexhaustible *Mine* and *Mint* to the *Popes* of *Rome*, that one of them, long ago, call'd his *Lord-Treasurer* Fool, for advising him (as of late in *England*, and now at this day a Mode in *France*) to shut up his *Exchequer*, for it run low, (as *Actions* now in the *Sword-Blade Company*.) And I am of the *Pope's* Mind, the Man, though he was a Lord, and a Lord-Treasurer, yet he was a *Novice*, and had but newly, by the Aid of the *Pope's* *Miss* bought his Place; and had not had the Experience to find all the Avenues by which Money enters to fill the *Pope's* *Exchequer*, which never could, in those Days be empty, so long as the *Pope* (to use his own words) could but hold a Pen in his Hand to write to *his Assé*, meaning *England*.

Rome and *Italy* (if not *France*) has, by Computation, more Atheists than true believing credulous *Papists*, to believe as *Priest-craft* or the Church believes.

But *England*; ay, *England*, whether by vertue of the Climate, or what conjunction of the Stars (I know not) is, and always was as very Bigots as the *Athenians* in *Greece*; to whom (dear Countrymen) I humbly address with *St. Paul's* Complement; Ye Men of *England*, I perceive that in all things ye are too (much Priest-ridden or) *Superstitious*. Poor Hearts! ye mean honestly, but know no better.

It is no hard matter to make some Men believe (not that the Moon is made of Green-Cheese, but that there is a Man in the Moon;

Moon; if spoken, *é Cathedra* (from whence the Pope then, and only then, speaks infallibly) or in *England*, from the *Infallible Pulpit*, the only Place in the Church for Devotion (now the Altars are demolished, but creeping up again in some Churches) in *England*, I hear, in hopes of a pair of Lawn-Sleeves, or, at least Scotch-cloth Sleeves.

Cunning *Druides* or Popes first invented *Priest-craft*, and gave it *Birth*, then Fools and Priest-ridden Politicians (that went snips in the Profits) nourished the Brat and gave it suck.

'Tis high Blasphemy to think or say, that our Blessed Saviour and his Holy Apostles did not understand nor love the Christian Religion, the growth and continuance thereof, as well as we; but, did they ever (notwithstanding) endeavour to get an Act of Parliament, a Hangman, or a Jaylor, or (as the *French* Hector) Troops of Dragoons to make new Converts? Is not this *Priest-craft* all over?

No Kingdom or Country (that ever as yet) was conquered, but the Conquest was lost, if not preserved by the same Methods of Force, and a standing Army that conquer'd the same; even so all *Priest-craft*, which was begun by a pious Fraud and Cheat, must be sustain'd by Fraud; or Force, if the Fraud be once discover'd, or else it is laugh'd at, and hooted out of the World.

Thus at this Day, the *Image* of the *French Hector* is set up at *Arles*, and deify'd by the flattering Priests, and ador'd by the silly Mob; but, thanks to an Act of Parliament (the Decree of the Senate of *Arles*, one of the greatest Cities in *France*) enacting—the very same Adoration and Worship to the King's Image, as is paid to Almighty God.

Or, As the *Venetian Ambassador's Litany* to the Pope, when he came with a Chain about his Neck, like a Dog under the Pope's Table, praying, or rather howling, in these very Words—*Domine (Deus Papa) Miserere*—Oh! Lord God Pope, have Mercy on us—meaning, us the *Hogen Mogen States of Venice*, who had dared to be so wicked as to *sin against* the Pope.

Almighty God is merciful, and full of Compassion to Sinners that offend Him, but the Pope and Popelings, and the Priest-craft Tribe, never forgive, 'till they be fully revenged upon those that have so little Wit or Grace as to offend them; Sins against Priest-craft they make to be very near the Sin against the Holy

Ghost, that shall never be forgiven, neither in this World, nor in the World to come.

And if I should even happen (which God forbid) to be so senseless as to be a Papist, and believe Transubstantiation, and that the Priest can turn the Wafer, not only into Flesh, Blood, and Bone, but infuse a living Soul into it, and Divinity enough to make it a God; I would and ought to adore it; but much more ought I to adore the *Make-God* Priest, in as much as the *Creator* is greater and better than the *Creature*; and he that can *make* a God, than the God that is *made*: And not only the *Make-God-Pope*, but the *Make-God-Priest*, is at least as infallible as God Himself, and may justly take the Wall of all Mankind.

And yet, for all this, neither the Pope, nor his Cardinal, Bishops, Priests, nor all his *Lateran* Council could ever yet agree—where this same Infallibility lies.

Some of them assert, that it lies in the Pope; some, in General Councils, some in both *conjoin'd*, some, in the Pope *alone*, but only then when he sits in the Conclave, in his Consistory, or Chair of State, with his Triple Crown, or Mitre, to keep his Skull warm; some hold also, that Infallibility lies in Traditions only, infallible Traditions.

But our Church of *England* more honestly, and by consequence, more truly, in her 39 Articles, comes to Confession, and professes, that she may err.

And if she say true, then it is impossible to be certainly and infallibly a Sin to be a Deserter, and to Schismatize from her; for every Tenent that is own'd to be only probable, may and may not be true; 'tis an even lay, happy go lucky, Knots or Flats, hap hazard, whether Schism in separating from such a Church be a lawful Separation, as ours from Popery, or a sinful Schism, as some high-flown Hotspurs that *ride Post*, and Gallop, (Neck-break) towards a *Conge-de-lyer*, would make Fools believe.

But, I am a Church of *England*-Man, according to that honest Confession, that *all of us are Men*: frail Men, Worms; or as the Prophet *David*, *silly Worms, and not Men*: And grant we be Men, we are but Men, and *humanum est errare*; we must (and so must the *Pope*) put off this frail Flesh before we can attain to be infallible.

And truly, so much (*Albino*) this present *Pope* (who, like my self,

self, was a Captain before he was a Priest) and therefore, perhaps, has the more cause to be sensible of humane Frailties, and to know himself, and therefore seems to confess to the whole World, that he is not Infallible, for that he cannot these four or five years infallibly decide who has most right to the *Indian Mines* (the House of *Austria* or *Bourbon*) but refers it to his College of *Cardinals*.

And though they neither have *Wit enough* to decide the Controversy, and to pronounce who is in the right, and who the *Sinner*; yet they *have the Wit* to keep a good Tongue in their Heads, and hold their Tongues till they have measured the Swords of the bold Pretenders, and have seen which of them wears the longest Sword.

Obj. But will some be apt to say, Is there no Infallibility now in the *World*? do we all march towards Heaven *Hit or Miss*, and by guess?

Ans. I answer, That there are many Pretenders to Infallibility, and to be Ambassadors of Heaven, Ministers of God, and sent by him.

And *Priest-craft* is nothing else but such an impudent pretence, without shewing their *Credentials* under the *Broad Seal* of Heaven.

The Apostle *Paul* did vouch his Mission, that he was Ambassador from God, by mighty Works, Miracles, and Words.

Our blessed Saviour vouched his Mission, and that Men should believe he was sent of God, and came of an Errand from God, or else, says he, believe me for the very Works sake.

He that believes in impudent *Priest-craft*, that shews no *Credentials nor Voucher*, but a Jaylor, a Hangman, a Constable, Pre-ferment, or *Smithfield Fires*, may, and may as well and rationally be a new Convert in *France*, or a *Mahometan* in *Turky*, and believe the *Alcoran*, as well as the *Bible*, to be the Word of God, if he had happened to be born and to live in *Turky*.

Besides, our *Church of England Priests* pretend to be sent by a fallible Church that may err: And then it follows, that they, her Sons, may err: and then it follows also necessarily, that Persecution and Force is Nonsense upon her own Confession and Principles, lest she kick against the Prick unawares, as *St. Paul* did, before his Conversion, and persecute Christ in his Members.

Pretenders to Infallibility are,

1. The Law of Nature, and I am content to admit it, so soon as it is universally adjusted and agreed upon, what is, and what is not the Law of Nature.

Justice seems to make as fair a Title as any, and right to be one of the Laws of Nature; and it is great pity that so many People find so many Flaws in their Title.

I have lived amongst the *naked Indians* that pretend to no Worship, Adoration, nor Religion at all; and if *St. Chrysostome* had been as great a Traveller as I, he durst not have inserted in his *Te Deum* — *All the Earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting*: for *Indians* generally do not worship any thing at all of God, (who they say is good, and cares not for any Worship they can give) but the Devil, for fear he should do them a Mischief; but the Law of Nature does not teach them Justice, more than it does the *Irish Tories*, whose Morning Prayer is, that God would send them a good Booty that Day;) even so the *Indians* will naturally Steal, and murder one another; as Fish in a Pond, the great and the strong devour the small Fry, and grow fat thereby.

2. The second pretender to Infallibility is the Bible. And that I admit too, so soon as it is agreed which Chapter and Verse is God's Word, and which not, and why? And also that the true meaning and Interpretation thereof be adjusted.

For, as for some Verses and Clauses in the Holy Bible, the very Pen-men thereof did not sometimes know very well, whether the same were the Dictates of the Spirit of God or no: sometimes they write — *Thus saith the Lord* — And not I, but the Lord commands so and so: and then again in a Qualm or a Quandary, modestly pretends to guessing, I think also, says *St. Paul*, that I have the Spirit of God.

And as for our blessed Saviour, some question whether he ever writ or was a Pen-man in his Life, whilst he liv'd; some Histories say, that after he came to Heaven, he writ a Letter and sent it to *Ediffa*, but this wants Confirmation.

We read, that he writ (I know not what) in the Church: I answer, It was not in his Sermon Notes, for he never wrote in his Life but once; and that was with his Finger in the Dust.

Our blessed Saviour did never bid Men read the New Testament, for there was no New Testament in his Time; Thousands were converted with his Words and Works; not with his Scriptures; for, as I said before, he never writ any Scripture, nor commanded any to be written in all his Life-time, that we read of.

Some

Some say, and our *English* Translation seems to favour it, that he bid the *Jews* read the Bible, or *search* the Scriptures, in the *Imperative* Mood.

And the original *Greek* Word, translated *search*, may as well be translated in the *Indicative* Mood; as if the blessed *Jesus* did say, to the *Jews*; *ye search the Scriptures, and in them ye think to find eternal Life, and they are they that testifie of me*: And yet (for all this) ye will not come unto me, that ye may have Life.

No Man living, that ever I met with, does believe all the Holy Scriptures, more sincerely, and upon better Grounds than myself; but for a Man to say, that he believes the Holy Scriptures, and knows not why nor wherefore, tells a Lye; because he does believe, and knows not why.

Such a Man as believes the Holy Bible, because he is born and bred up under that Dispensation, would as well believe the *Alcoran*, if he had been *born and bred* in *Turkey*.

This puts me in mind of that *sawcy* Answer which a *Jesuite* (as I have heard) gave to a poor Country Fellow that asked his Opinion about a Passage in the *first Chapter* of the Holy Bible, where we read, that at the end of every of the first three Days of the Creation, that God saw that what he made every Day was good, and the Evening and the Morning was the first Day; and so the second and third Day.

Now, quoth *Hob*, to the *Jesuite*, by the Evening and the Morning, the part of the Night and Day, by an easie Figure, is put for the whole Night and Day. Yea, quoth the *Jesuite*. Then, replied *Hob-Nails*, how is it possible that there could be either Night or Day, when there was neither Sun, Moon, nor Stars, for they were not made till the fourth Day? If there was something like the Sun, as indeed Light there was the first Day, God called it Day, and the Dirkeness called he Night, but they both stood stock still; for if it had moved never so little, they must have moved towards each other, and consequently have destroy'd each other: And Motion being the only measure of Time, and no Earth for the Sun to skip about till the third Day, how could there be twenty four Hours in a Day and Night, or one Minute? In short, the *Jesuite* was nonpluss'd, as the Story goes, and profanely answered, in the Words of *Pigbius*, another *Jesuite*, that the Scriptures are a *Nose of Wax*, that you may turn this way or

that.

that way, or indeed any way. But he might have found a better Answer, if I had been his Tutor.

And yet, this I must say, that all Sects, in all Ages of Christendom, have quoted Holy Scripture to vouch their Opinions, though never so extravagant, and contrary to each other, one thumbs one Page therein, turns down a Leaf, and cries, this makes for me and my Opinion; the other gives him the Lye, and says, that it makes for him and his Opinion a plain Proof, and follows his Lye with a Stab, and so murdering each other for God's sake, and for Religion, as did the first Couple *Cain and Abel*, and for the Murther, to vouch it, both shew the same warrant, the Bible.

A great ado, and a sad to do; a great deal of Bustle and Noise, a great deal of Murther, Rapine, and Ruine is made in the World about Religion, more than any other Matter or Thing in the World.

But the *Priests* of all Religions are the same, in that respect, commonly; they are the *Sticklers*, and clap their Hands, and cry *Hullo*; setting the mad and *Priest-ridden Laity* at work, to fight up to the Ears in Blood for them, and to support and maintain their Supremacy; but of all *Priests*, the *Popes* have been in several Ages the great Horse-Leaches, and Blood-suckers, and have occasion'd the Murther of more Millions of Men than the *French Hector*, a greater Plague to Mankind than Pestilence and Famine, or all the Plagues of *Egypt*.

And whatever share Insatiable Avarice, and unbounded Ambition may claim in the bloody Attempts, Religion, Religion is the Word, and he kills for God's sake, and the *Pope's* sake.

So that many wise Men think, that it is impossible but this Rage in Christendom at this Day must end in a Religious War, which God in his Mercy prevent and forbid.

But the *Ethiopian* must change his Skin, and the Leopard his Spots, before the *Papists*, (especially the *Jesuits*, those *Masters of Art* in Bloody *Priest-Craft*) will cease to Plot, Ruine, and Destroy all Protestants, of what distinction soever, *Hereticks* all, and fit for nothing but *Fire and Faggot*.

In England indeed, where they are so much inferior in Strength and Power, in a late Reign they were for *Liberty of Conscience*; not in love to the *Nonconformists*, (whom they hate more mortally

mortally than a *High-flown Churchman*) being not altogether so far distant from their persecuting *Priest-craft*, and bloody Principles.

But in all other Countries, where they are most potent, *the Inquisition, the Hangman, the Dragoons, and the Jaylors*, are the Holy Pillars of their *sanguine Priest-craft*.

He is no true *Papist*, that believes not that the *Pope and General Council*, (tho' there never was, nor never can be a *General Council* in the Christian World; yet what they impudently enough call a *General Council*, conjoyn'd with the *Pope*,) is *Infallible*.

But the *Council of Constance*, almost two hundred Years ago, with conjunction with the *Pope*, did ordain, That *nulla Fides servanda cum Hereticis*; no Faith is to be kept with a Heretick.

So that a *Papist* (if human Nature, and Compassion to Mankind, do not qualify and amend his *Priest-craft Divinity*,) cannot be held by any Tye or Obligation, from doing all the Mischief they can or dare do to every *Protestant*, being bound in Conscience to do it.

No Leagues nor Covenants, confirm'd with Oaths and Sacraments (of their Wafer-God) can oblige longer, than till they can safely do Mischief, and be out of the reach of *Jack Ketch* and the Hangman.

The Devil goes about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour; so they, especially their *Priests* and *Jesuits*. So that 'tis a wonder if they do not *run a muck*, as indeed they have done in *Ireland, France, Hungary, and Transilvania*, and will do it in all Countries where they can wheedle a Bigot, Superstitious, Priest-ridden Prince, to be their *Executioner* or *Headsmen*.

Did not the *Pope* send all the Princes in Christendom upon a Fools Errand, to gain the Holy (*unholy*) Land, that he might (as he did in their Absence) rob them of their Territories, to add to *St. Peter's* Patrimony?

Thus he made the rich Emperor poor, to this Day, and to kiss his Toe, and be his Groom, and hold his Stirrup.

Yet he is not proud, good Man, not he; nor covetous to speak on; cares not for Gold. Oh! the Hypocrisie of *Priest-craft*; like him that gap'd for a fatter *Bishoprick*, and at the same time turn'd his Head aside, and cry'd, *Nolo Episcopari*. Thus Scullers look one way and row another.

If they hate Money now, why do they not *refund* out of St. Peter's *Patrimony*, what by *Priest-craft* their Predecessors have robb'd?

If they hate Cruelty, why are they not now gentler, meek, and kind to *Protestants*; to shew their Repentance for the innocent Blood of *Hereticks*, as they call 'em, shed in all Ages, in all Nations?

During the time of the *Holy War*, the *Pope* raised 100000 Men, (*pretendedly* against the *Turks*) but made them face about into *Spain*, and murther as many *Dissenters* as the *Papists* did in my time in *Ireland*; and gave them as ample Pardons for all Sins committed, and to be committed, as if they had kill'd so many *Turks*.

They murther'd for God's sake, and the *Priest's* sake, 200000 Men, Women, and Children, both in *Spain* and *Ireland*, in few days.

And if nothing but *Reprisals* can make *Papists* civil and quiet, there seems a *Necessity* of a *Religious War*, or a *General Liberty of Conscience* in *Christendom*.

This latter Remedy is the *only* Remedy I know against *Priest-craft*, and the sad mischievous Consequences thereof in the World.

Bless me! that ever there should be such a Generation of Men, that cannot be quiet, cannot live, nor let live; the World is wide enough, and room enough for all; will nothing please Men, but to turn Devils Incarnate?

But look to't, *Harm watch*, *Harm catch*: If you will needs bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not *consumed one of another*.

But some will Object, and say, *Shall we not love the Truth*?

I Answer, yes, yes, love the *Truth*, but love *Peace* too. But then, is not the Question of *Pontius Pilate* seasonable in this Case, *What is Truth*?

No Man can answer this Question fully and punctually, especially no Church of *England* Man can; because we profess our *human* Nature, and consequently *may* err, and then consequently must *blush at* and *blame* all Principles and Pretences to Persecution.

I will Instance in three pretended Truths that are in vogue amongst us, for the most unquestionable Tenents, and the most applauded of all other, amongst us *Protestants* of all Perswasions.
And

And yet others again (that think themselves to be both prudent and pious Christians) pretend that they are but Moot-Cases, and as much to be said against them as for them. And these three are *Sabbathising*, *Family-Duties*, and *Saying Grace*; all good things, and yet *not so patent* in Holy Scripture (say some) as is commonly pretended.

1. *For Sabbathising.*

The Sabbath, *ob the Sabbath!* meaning (most fillily tho') the *Sunday*, called (by the cunning of *Priest-craft*) *not by Holy Scripture*, The Lord's Day—to recommend it the better to the unthinking *Mob*, it being, to *Lecturers* especially, and to unbenificed *Non-Con's* (that live by Alms, and no *Pater-noster* no *Penny*, says the *Green-Aprons*) of all the other seven Days the Priest's best Market-Days, to put off his Wares, and turn them into Money; whether he lets Men have a good Pennyworth, or a good Commodity for their Money, that's seldom or never examin'd, if he has but the Wit to hold his Tongue when he comes near to a displeasing Doctrine or Use; or have but the Grace to please them, which is no hard matter, if he has but moderate Skill in *Priest-craft*.

Which did and does see it very necessary to tell a few Lyes out of Scripture, to make easie Coxcombs, and Priest-ridden *Bigots* believe, that by the Seventh Day in the Fourth Commandment, is meant the First Day; that's one Lye; and the which is by the Holy Scripture changed from the Seventh Day to the First Day, that's another impudent Lye; which so many good Men, learned Men, and wise Men, could never so long have been imposed upon, and imposed upon others, but that they had not otherwise so good a Charter for their chief Market-Day to vend their Wares; or else, perhaps, because there is a kind of Witchcraft in Priest craft.

Well then, will some be apt to say to me, You have *essay'd* very finely in your *Priest-craft*, being a *Divine* your self, you have taken away from your Brethren their *Sabbaths*, (their *most profitable Market-Days*, and *Fair-Days in all the Week*) you will have them all swarming about your Ears, and I would have you to know, that the Sting of a Scorpion is not more fatal, more incurable, and more venomous than a stingy and enraged Priest, especially when you pierce him to the Heart, and touch the quick,

Quick, (that is) when you meddle with the *Craft* by which he gets his Wealth.

Why do you endeavour to fright me thus? dear Brethren, if you knew me, you would never attempt it.

When Dogs bark at the *Moon* she keeps her Course, heeds them not; and when Lunatics rave and rail in *Bedlam* (or *Bethlehem*) against their Keepers for disciplining them, and sometimes lashing them, they strike the harder, because they thereby perceive their Distemper or Madness is the Deeper radicated and not curable but by severe Methods: He that Slashes them is their best Friend, whether they know it or no.

Can Bigotted Men be in their Wits when they espouse a Religion without a License, I mean, without Reason, the only Test that is given to rational Men to govern themselves by; that Bigot would be a *Mahometan*, if he believes in Christianity, and neither knows why nor wherefore; especially if he had been bred or born in *Turkey*.

The Fourth Commandment is my *Memorandum*, so far as it remains uncanceled by Christ and his Apostles in the New-Testament, not one Jot further; for there I shake Hands with it and leave it, lest, with the *Galatians*, I leave my Christianity (as the Apostle *Paul* says) and be fallen from Grace.

Fallen from Grace! that's a *hard word*, what's the matter that *St. Paul* says, he is afraid, that all the while he had been Preaching to them, he had been washing a Blackamoor (or, labouring in vain.) The reason is plain, *Gal. 4. 10, 11. Ye observe Days, and Months, and Times, and Years; but I do not abrogate the Grace of God, Gal. 2. 21.*

Or, to use *St. Paul's* Language, on the like occasion to the *Colossians*, 2. 16, 17. *Let no Man judge you; (or, to translate it better than our English Version, $\nu\sigma\delta\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon$ in the Greek, Dumnet in the Latin) Let no Man damn you, or condemn you in Meat or in Drink, or in respect of an Holy-Day, or of the New-Moon, or of the Sabbath-Days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the Body is Christ; the Sun of Righteousness, by whose light these Shadows, Darkness, or Mists, like Vapours, are dispers'd and vanish'd away.*

Then some will say, by this Account one Day is no more Holy now in Holy Scripture than another; not the Seventh-Day or Sab-

Sabbath-Day more Holy than the First-Day (*intrinsically*) nor then the Sixth-day (*Friday*) the *Turks Sabbath-Day*.

Right, you are in the right on't, neither Seventh-Days (or Sabbath-Days) nor New-Moons, nor Sabbath-Days, nor Sabbathical Years, or every Seventh Year, nor any other part of the Levitical Law is now any more obligatory to us, than to our Carpenters, and Masons, and Weavers, to build no Houses without Battlements, nor to weave *Lindsey-Woolsey*.

But again, I doubt not but some will urge, that the Ten Commandments are Moral, and consequently Perpetual; then the *Saturday-Markets at Colchester, Leaden-Hall, and all England over*, are sinful and illegal; Which cannot be deny'd, if all the Fourth Commandment be Moral.

But did not our blessed Saviour Rise on the First-Day of the Week, namely *Sunday*?

Yes, no doubt, and died on *Good-Friday*, by whose Death we have Life, what's all this to the purpose, or to disanul the Fourth Commandment, as afore said?

But does not St. Paul enjoin the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 16. 2. as he had also, in the *Churches of Galatia*. That on the first Day of the Week, let everyone of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Whence note, that the First-Day of the Week, by this Text appears to be a *Working-Day*, a Day of Accounts, or casting up their Shop Books, or other Accounts of their Estate, that they might thereby compute by the ballance of Accounts, what they had gain'd or lost the last Week, that thereby they might the better calculate and reckon what proportion thereof they could well spare over and above the maintenance of their Families and Trade, to give to the Poor; because, though Charity should begin at home, it should not end at home.

St. John (the Divine) as he is commonly stiled, but what his Surname, I cannot tell, only as he is pleased to describe himself to be a Brother of the Seven Churches in *Asia*, and a Fellow Sufferer, and a Companion in Tribulation; he (I say) was ravished in Spirit on the Lord's-Day.

But I cannot tell what he means by his being in the Spirit, more than what Day of the Week he calls the Lord's-Day.

Doctors differ in Opinion, some think it was *Thursday, Holy-Tourf-*

Thursday, or Ascension; some *Good-Friday* (because by Christ's Death we have Life): Some the *First day* of the Week; it is left (as most of his *Revelations* are) a Riddle, that many have made bold and uncertain Guesses at, none have yet resolv'd; and it was a long time after it was writ, before it obtain'd the Title of *Canonical Scripture*, which twenty Books more had got before it; but now are degraded and left as Apocryphal, and not bound up with the New-Testament.

Obj. But does not the Common-Prayer Book, (which is Statute-Law) Rubricks, and all Statute-Law, teach us to say and pray, *Lord have Mercy upon us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law*, namely, to resolve to keep the Seventh-Day or *Saturday*, on which Day we resolve to keep a Market or a Fair, say what we will, or pray what we will to the contrary.

Ans. To which I answer not one word, in pain and peril that shall come thereon; and mentioned in that Statute; only I say, this is pious Priest-craft all over; that a Man, in spight of his Teeth, shall say *Amen* against his Conscience, or Mathematical Untruths, upon pain, &c.

Now, Catchpole! your Informer! you see that I to this Objection answer not one word.

In the Primitive Times of Christianity, for the first 300 Years, some kept the Seventh-Day, some the First Day of the Week for their Sabbath; some kept both the Seventh Day and the First-Day, two Sabbaths in a Week; some Believers none at all, but every Day alike, as every Man pleased, or was perswaded in his own Mind, until the first Christian Emperor *Constantine* (who was born in my Parish of *All-Saints* in *Colchester-Castle*) if some Historians tell truth, did enact, That the First Day of the Week should be the Christian-Sabbath; and generally all Christendom do so observe the same by the Law of the Lands, since his Reign, not before, for 300 Years after Christ.

But yet, though Christians keep their Sabbath on the First-Day of the Week, yet not all of them on one and the same time; for our Sabbatical Day and Devotions thereon are *done* and gone in *England*, before they *begin* their Holy Exercises on Sabbatical-Days in *New-England*.

One Day in Seven (then) is and ought to be set apart for God's Service more particularly; the Six other Days you may labour;

labour; nay, some must labour Six Days in a Week, or else fast or starve on *Sundays*.

Six Days thou shalt labour, says the Fourth Commandment, but do not Lords and Ladies break this Commandment, that never laboured one Day in their whole Life time? I answer, Yes, I believe they do Sin therein, being (as the *Dutch* call Gentlemen) *idle Men*: Idleness being the root of all Evil, whilst Men live like Rats and Mice, only to eat Parmazene; and run squeaking up and down, or like the Plague of *Egypt*, called *Locusts*, that did nothing but Mischief, and eat up every green thing. If there were many Idle Men, and Idle Women, we should have a Famine. Therefore *St. Paul* endeavours to starve such Locusts, saying, *He that will not Labour, let him not Eat*.

Nevertheless, Six Days shalt thou Labour, as in the Fourth Commandment, was never observed by the *Jews*, to whom the same was first given; for they had many Holy-Days as well as the *Papists*, who are always poor, by reason of their *many idle Days*; in *Popish Countries*, more numerous than the Jewish Feasts of *Tabernacles*, *Passover*, *Trumpets*, &c.

And over and above all these Festivals, the *Jews* were idle, and did not Labour, Plow nor Sow for one whole Year in Seven, called the Seventh Year, or Sabbatical Year; a tolerable Injunction in *Palestine* and *Mesopotamia*, where their warm Sun impregnates the Earth without Seeds; but if we, in these Northern Countries, should keep a Sabbatical Year, we should starve.

Family-Duties

Are the next *plausible piece* of Priest-craft Divinity, I mean, *praying with the Family* (not that I condemn it) though our blessed Saviour seems to condemn it by his *Practice* and *Preaching*,

1. His Practice: For tho', as *Abraham* taught his Children, and so should all Masters and Mistresses of Families, give good Advice to their Families, as did our blessed Saviour to his Family the Twelve Apostles; yet we never read that he prayed with them, only taught them their *Pater-noster*.

If the blessed *Jesus* lov'd any of his Family better than other, it was *Peter*, and his two Cozen-Germans, *James* and *John*; yet he never vouchsafed to pray with these; nay, he left them, and
would

would not suffer them to pray with him, when he was in his Agony, and pray'd the most earnestly, in his common Form of Prayer, saying the third time the same words: Not that any Man is obliged to use Words when he prays in Secret, to God that is a Spirit, and is spoken to, as much in a Wish or Thought of the Heart, as words of the Tongue, and knows the Language of the Heart, as well as that of the Tongue.

But People cannot join in publick Prayers, except they have a Spokesman, or Speaker; but for Family Prayer, our Saviour by *2dly*, His preaching commands, not to call to Prayers, *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, but shut them out, and shut the Door, and thy Father that hears thee in secret will reward thee openly; therefore be not as the Hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the Market, or make a noise in Family-Duty, that all the Neighbourhood may take notice that a godly Man lives there; and consequently take his Word for the Goodness and Price of the Commodity he sells, and come to his Shop; for all the Street heard him pray in his Family last Night, and sing too. Come to my Shop, here dwells a godly Man, that prays aloud; perhaps Nonsense or Blasphemy, tho' whilst he himself, perhaps, is half Drunk, and his Family, some Yawning, and some a Sleep, or half a Sleep. We fetch'd this piece of Priest-craft too from no worse place, I'll assure you, than from beyond the *Tweed*.

Saying Grace.

Which they vouch for most Canonical Divinity, from that of *St. Paul to Timothy*, *Every Creature of God is good, if it be sanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer.*

By Prayer; that is not as the Custom is now, to be understood of Prayer, by word of Mouth necessarily.

For, as I said before, there is a Mental Prayer, or a Prayer of the Heart or Thought, a good Wish, as well as Lip-labour, which is never acceptable to God Almighty, except it be accompanied with the good Wish or Prayer of the Heart, the only Prayer that God accepts, or that does us any good.

We are commanded to *pray continually*, and consequently to *say Grace* continually, every time we breathe in the Air, which is also a good Creature of God, and more necessary than Meat or Drink; for we may live a Day without Meat or Drink, but
not

not one Minute without Air to Breathing, The Papists usually, instead of saying Grace so formally as amongst us, only make the Sign of the Cross upon their Hearts or Breasts: Therefore give me a Reason becoming a Man, a rational Man, why we should say a long long *Scotch Grace* when we go to Eat, more than when we go to smoke a Pipe, or drink Coffee, or a Cup of cold Water, the common Drink of *Scotland*, especially in the High-lands: I know it that have liv'd there three Years together, in the very midst of the High-lands at *Finlarick Castle* above *Lough-Tay*, where, and at the Castle of *Macklore*, I was Governour and Deputy-Governour four Years; and one of the *first and last Justices of the Peace* that ever was in *Scotland*; and *Fellow of Caius College* in *Cambridge*, half the time that I serv'd under General *Monk* in *Scotland*. Very few Men now alive therefore have travel'd over so much *Scotland* as I have done, and knows more of their *Geneva Priestcraft* than I do.

But, good Mr. Trencher-Chaplain, good Mr. Say-grace, do not throw a Plate at my Head for hindring you thus of many a good Bit, that if it were not for *Saying-Grace* (a drudgery below a Lord to do himself, or pray himself when a Journey-man is kept for the very nonce, or else I say) Mr. Say-grace might Dine with the Grooms or the Huntsmen, who have many times a greater Salary, and thought more useful and necessary than Mr. Say-grace.

But Priest-craft has made it a necessary piece of Divinity; however, I believe it helps the Trencher-Chaplain to many a good Bit, that would otherwise escape his Chaps: Therefore not a word more at this time, concerning such an *universally cried-up piece of Divinity*, Superstition or Priest-craft; for we never read that Christ or his Apostles *said Grace* either before Meat or after Meat. After Meat never; nor before Meat, at Meals, as we do; He gave Thanks twice, and but twice, before he Eat; first that he might, (and when he was about to) do a Miracle, in feeding many Thousands with five Barly-Loaves, and some small Fishes: And, at consecrating the blessed Supper or Sacrament.

And when the Trencher-Chaplain is about to do either of these, I give him a *License to say Grace* before he Eat, and before he Drink, in a Tavern too, (or with the Butler) if he please.

I cannot but smile to my self, when I behold and see how silly Men scramble and tug, run and ride, swear and swear, for swear
and

and lye, cheat and dissemble, kill and murder one another, and all that comes in their road or way to get Money, Money, Money. Poor Worms! if not as yet altogether (but very shortly they shall be) Worms and worse, namely, Worms meat. For what is Man's Life, it is even a Dream, a Vapour, or Mist, that continues for a very little while, and then vanisheth away. And so has all Religions hitherto, and all Opinions in Religion. The *Jews* Religion flourished a while, it is now vanished, and some of the sacred Penmen thereof condemn'd.

St. Augustine thinks that *Solomon* is damn'd, because we read of his Sin, as we do of the Witchcraft and Idolatry of *Manasses*; but we also read of the Repentance of *Manasses*, but not a word of *Solomon's* Repentance, for his strange Apostacy from God, cajol'd by his Wives, Outlandish-Women, to the number of Seven hundred, that were Queens or Princesses; enow one would think in all Conscience.

*A Thousand unto One's too much, I guess,
To break the brawny Back of Hercules.*

Nevertheless, over and above, and besides all these Seven hundred Wives, he had Three hundred Misses or Concubines, that turned away his Heart when he was Old, says the Text, *1 Kings* 11. 3, 4. and yet not very Old, for he died when he was about twenty Years younger than I am; but he lived fast, as did the old Prophet *David*, who also died in a decrepid Age, but much younger than I, and many others are now, that have liv'd temperately with only one *Wife*.

But, I say, Religion, and all Opinions in Religion (good and bad, true or false, 'tis all one for that) never did, nor ever shall continue long in the same posture; but, like the Earth and Sea, and all sublunary things, sometimes ebbing, sometimes flowing, always in Motion; and therefore all things therein must needs be subject to change and vicissitudes.

Whether the Sun, or (which is more probable) the Earth turn round every Day, 'tis not in this case a Pin matter; it is sufficient for my purpose to observe, that not one of them is in a daily and perpetual hurry, and turning round like a Coach-Wheel, the Spokes that are one while undermost, soon gain the ascendant, and *vice versa*.

Therefore it is impossible that any thing on Earth should continue long, wise Nature (or which is all one) the God of Nature
so

So ordering the matter, that every thing has its Time, a time to be born, and a time to dye, to begin and to end, to encrease and grow, and then to decay and decrease, which is a comfortable Meditation to those that are in Misery, and a pretty *Memento* (like a Hand in the Margin, or *Mene Tekel*) to abate the Pride of the most topping Conqueror, and the most exalted Prince, Prelate, or Pope in the World.

The true Christian Religion, in Christ's and the Apostles time, made a little Progress in *Palestine*, and some other parts in *Asia* and *Europe*, and (God knows) but a little, and that little was almost eaten up and devoured in the Third Century by *Arianism*; and the greatest General Council that ever was in the World was at *Ariminum*, who were all (but one single-ey'd Man) *Arrians*, that denied the Divinity of our Lord Jesus.

Infomuch that St. *Athanasius* (whom the Wicked did nick-name *Sathanasius*) said, that *Totus Mundus est Arianus*, the whole World are *Arrians*.

And afterwards *Priest-craft* got the Ascendant at *Rome*, and then Men were——out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire.——And he that would not believe in the *Make-God Pope*, and *Make-God Priest*, and swear that all they said was infallibly true, they burnt him to Death, or otherwise destroyed him.

Infomuch, as it was said about Two hundred Years ago, in *Martin Luther's* Time, that if he (who was better than the *Papists*, but yet had Frailties and Errors inexcusable, as well as *John Calvin*) had not appear'd in the World like a Morning-Star, to give some glimpses of Light to that dark Age and Dispensation, the silly People might have been perswaded by the *Pope* and *Priest-craft*, to eat Grass as the Beasts do.

And what Blood and Ruine these Contests have made, and yet do make in the World, about Religion, it is dreadful to consider: So that we may well say with the Wise Heathen (*Plutarch*),
 “ I had rather that Men should believe there was no such Man
 “ in the World as *Plutarch*, than to believe that he did nothing
 “ but devour his own Children, (as *Saturn* is said to do) and to
 “ delight and take satisfaction, and be pleas'd, and very well
 “ pleas'd with the Blood of Innocents.

And *Plutarch* thinks it much more Honour to God, to deny that He is, or, at least, that He minds not earthly Matters, than

to affirm, that the God they pretend to Honour does delight in innocent Blood, or the Blood of innocent Children, who never knew their Right hand from their Left.

2 Sam. 21. 8, 9. *But the King took the two Sons of Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah, whom she bear unto Saul, even Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five Sons of Michal, the Daughter of Saul, (that's false for Michal was barren, and never had a Child, 2 Sam. 6. 23.) whom she bare to Adriel, the Son of Barzillai, the Meholahite; that's false too, for Michal's Husband was Paltiei, alias Phalti the Son of Laish, which was of Galim, a Country bordering upon the Moabites. And he (namely, King David) deliver'd them into the hands of the Gibeonites, who hang'd them in the Mountain before the Lord; so they died all seven together, and ver. 14. God was then appeased with the Lands.*

Some are of Opinion (but I hope otherwise) that, As Fishes in the Sea, and all Creatures on Earth, do nothing but watch and catch; the stronger, they are preying the more upon the weaker, and upon one another, as they get an advantage: And that all the Earth over (as well as in the *Indies*) there are Canibals or Man-eaters, in some sence, and no Religion, yet ever did, nor ever shall, eradicate this natural Appetite.

Good Laws indeed, in all well-govern'd Commonwealths have curb'd and bridl'd the Impetuous Lusts of Men, as in *Greece* and *Heathen Rome*: But since *Rome* became to be govern'd by Priest-craft, floods of Blood and Ruine have deluged Christendom. So that it had been happier for the World rather never to have heard of Religion, than such a Priest-craft that robs Men on their Death-Beds of their Estates, and Beggars also thereby their Posterity, with a Priest-craft Story of Purgatory; to Cheat for God's sake: And if a Man deny to be cheated, or dare call it *Pia Fraus*, a Godly Flam, then he is an Heretick, an Atheist, (if he will not be a silly Papist) and then he is not far from his Grave, but is murder'd in the Inquisition, or in *Smithfield*, or, at least among home Friends buried alive in a Jail. For Priest-craft makes Men not only Zealous and Hotspurs, but as furious and mad as St. Paul says he was, when he persecuted honest Christians even unto strange Cities, that is, made them Exiles or Refugees; as Enemies to God, because Enemies to Priest-craft; for (say the Sacerdotal Prosecutors) *Love me and love my Dog;*

Dog ; much more, if you love God, you love his Ambassadors; but then I admit none of them for Ambassadors of God, nor give them Audience, 'till they (as they should to all wise Men) shew their Credentials under the Broad-Seal of Heaven.

If these Credentials come only from a Church that is fallible, and may err (as may all Churches of Men, whilst they are Men, in this silly and frail Life, as well as the Church of *England*; nay, St. Peter was mistaken and rebuk'd for his Error and Dissimulation, and Time-serving by St. Paul) then it is impossible to justify Persecution against Dissenters, lest, perhaps, with St. Paul, they kick against the Pricks and persecute Christ.

Not any wise Papist, no, nor the *Pope* himself, believes that he is infallible. Father *Caron* (a Learned Papist) affirms that the *Pope*, though assisted with his Cardinals, may err, except in conjunction with that which never was, nor never will, or can be, to wit, a General Council.

In short, there are three Papists at least, that does not believe the *Pope* to be infallible, namely, himself, his Confessor, and he that empties his Close-Stool.

And if the *Pope* knows that he is fallible, he must either have no Conscience at all, or a seared Conscience, and Sin wilfully, if he dares, (as he used to do) to Imprison, Plunder, Kill and Destroy all Dissenters from his Opinion.

How many times has one *Pope* Curs'd, and Damn'd and Excommunicated another? They could not both be Infallible.

And, as I said before, where there is no certain Infallibility in any Church, all Persecution is unaccountable Nonsense.

What Apology then can rationally be made for the fam'd *Parisian* Massacre; where the Duckoy of a Wedding (betwixt one of the Daughters of *France*, with our Queen's Great Great Grandfather *Henry* the Fourth, King of *Navarre*, and a Protestant) all the Protestant Nobles, Gentry, and Thousands of the most eminent of the Commonalty, were all in one Night, trepan'd to Death and Murther'd, except the King's Brother, and the said King of *Navarre*, who was afterwards the most glorious King of *France*, till he was twice stabb'd by the Jesuits, say Historians, first into his Mouth, and broke his Teeth; and afterwards by *Ravilliac* stab'd to the Heart.

Where has there been a Prince, a Nobleman, or Commoner, nay, or a Parliament, that durst cope with the Priest-craft to this Day?

In *nomine Domini*, what a Halter would they be at? they have (as the Pharisees of old) the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and the uppermost Rooms at Feasts, Synods, and Court; the Nobles (down of their Knees) asking them Blessing, which they bestow in State, and very formally, and without Blushing, as if Bigot (on his Knees) only paid his Dues.

Risum teneatis amici?

Who can his Sides (from Laughing) hold the while?
Or, at such Mummery forbear to smile.

Our blessed Saviour never rid in State but once, and that was only upon an Ass, his Apostles were Footmen, and trudg'd from Country to Country, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, whilst they ride triumphant in Chariot, and Coach and Six.

But the Wheedle lies in this, namely, in making half-witted and bigotted Politicians believe (what no Man of Sence can be so stupid as to believe) that Priest-craft, by a Political Union, is necessary to Government; and that Christian-Government is a Noun-Adjective, and cannot stand by it self, without such Adjutants, and Ecclesiastick Supporters. But I'll speak more fully to this in

The CONCLUSION.

THE

THE CONCLUSION.

AND now, Reader, I have in love to Mankind, presented to your view the bloody Picture of *Priest-craft*, that has plagu'd Christendom in these Ten last Centuries, more than Mahomet, or the most Christian King.

A Queen called *Thomyris*, cut off the Head of that cruel King *Cyrus*, after she had conquer'd him, and threw it into a deep Basin of Blood, with this Scoff, in Indignation,

Satia te sanguine quem sitisti.

Now glut thy self with Blood (thy juster Fate)
Which thou in thirst of, gap'd for of late.

I have seen many a Highway-Man hang'd upon Gibbets; but, in all my Travels, I never saw any Spiritual Highway-Man (that robs and murders Men upon the Road Heaven-wards) according to their Merits, hang'd upon Gibbets.

No; they have, on the contrary, cajol'd Priest-ridden Magistrates, to be the Heads-men, or *Jack-Ketch*, to execute by the Writ *de Heretico comburendo*, all those that Priest-craft had (first) Excommunicated, for that which Priest-craft calls Heresy; but with most hypocritical Prayer, to be merciful to the poor Dissenter, when they deliver him over to the Secular Powers, on set purpose to be burnt to Ashes. Oh! abominable Dissimulation! and, oh! Bigotted Magistrate! that dare not, lest they themselves

selves be used like Hereticks and burnt, but do this wretched Drudgery, though against the Grain, in complacence to Priest-craft, and at their Peril.

Thus, in *Scotland*, at this Day, that Man that dares give or sell Meat or Drink to any that the Priest and his Lay-Elders have Excommunicated and Horn'd, that daring Man shall be served with the same Sawce, and be Excommunicated and Horn'd, and then his own Father and Mother, (I know it of my own knowledge, for many Years, when I quartered there) dares not give him a bit of Bread, to save his Life; but the Horn'd-man has no remedy but to fly out of the Kingdom of *Scotland*, or Starve, or stand in the Stool of Repentance in the open Church, and bewail his Offences against Holy Kirk.

Nay, Princes, Nobles, Kings are not exempt; the Priest-craft forc'd our King *Charles* the Second to stand upon that scandalous Stool of Repentance in the Kirk of *Scone*, and bewail the Sins and Idolatry of his Mother and his Father's House, and his own Sins, and take *their solemn League and Covenant* (the Master-piece of Presbyterian Priest-craft) before *Holy Kirk* would vouchsafe to own him or Crown him King of *Scots*.

I have read of the *Plagues of Egypt*, they were *Flea-bites* in comparison of the *Plague of Priest-craft*, of several Forms and Sects in Christendom, in several Ages, and several Countries, that I can mention, if I list. But whilst I write this Character and fatal Consequences of Priest-craft, I am quite tyred, because I mingle my *Tears* with my *Ink*, when I *wet* and *wet* my Pen, upon so doleful and tragical a Subject.

In nomine Domini Incipit omne malum.

What a nonsensical Proverb then is that which Priest-craft invented (to make themselves seem necessary to Monarchy) *no Bishop, no King*; or which is all one, *No Presbyter, no King*.

Presbyters and Bishops have been very Loyal Subjects, and the King's humble Servants, that is, so long as he will do their Drudgery, and be Priest-ridden, quietly, and maintain them and their Priest-craft. But if Princes or Nobles be so hardy as to refuse to do what the Bishop or Presbyter does enjoyn, then they are Rebels to God, by affronting his Emissaries and Ambassadors.

Wit,

Witness the many Bishops of *Rome* and elsewhere; for if the Emperors will hold their Stirrups, and kiss their Toe, why then, the Pope fliles them, *Dearly beloved Sons*.

But, if not, Excommunicate them, interdict their Kingdoms, sends *Clements* and *Ravilliacks* to stab them, *Damns* all their Subjects if they do not take up Arms and rebel against their Princes and Kings.

Thus *Thomas à Becket*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, was very willing to obey his King, *Henry II.* with a *Salvo honore Dei*; making God the Author of his *Priest-craft* and *Pride*.

And Bishop *Paudolphus* vouchsafed to Crown relaps'd King *John*, whilst he lay groveling at his Foot, with his Crown on his Head; which the insulting Priest kick'd off again with his Foot, and let him know, that he that Crown'd him could Uncrown him upon his Disobedience to *Priest-craft*; and make a Foot-ball of his Crown. Oh! Proud Priest! So that a *Bishop* or a *Presbyter* and no *King*, is rather true, excepting only those Bigot-Kings, that dare not but be Priest-ridden.

If Kings will take the Holy League and Covenant against themselves, as *Henry of France* and *Charles II.* in *Scotland*, and swear to maintain the *Church* and *Kirk*, why then they are very good Friends; if not, at *their Peril*.

One of the Plagues of *Egypt* was Frogs, that entred into their Kneeding-Troughs, Bed-Chambers, and Dining-Rooms; and if the finest Lord and Lady in *Europe*, if a Papist dare (which they do not) refuse to let a poor *Barefoot Capuchin* sit at the Head of the Table, Cheek by Jowl, with my nice fine Lady, though for want of clean Linen he is as Lousy, Greasy and Nasty as a Hog, and stinks like a Dog or Frog, then that Lord and Lady are in danger of the Inquisition, and to be burnt for Hereticks. For, say the *Capuchin Fryer*, how is it possible they should be any other than Hereticks in the very Heart of them; for refusing to Treat God's Emissaries, his Nuncio's and Ambassadors, is to affront God himself that sent him; and truly, I am of the *Fryer's* Opinion, if *the Church*, to which he belongs, be infallible.

But if we *Church of England Priests*, that appertain to a Church that professes that *Truly* she may err, then if we call our selves (as infallible *St. Paul* rightly calls himself) Ambassadors of God, the best Answer that an honest and wise Man can make therein-

to, is to say (as the *Hogen Mogen States of Holland* do when the most plausible Project for the good of the State is propos'd, they only answer) *It may be so.*

And what *may be*, *may also not be*; for all Probabilities have two Handles, and you may safely take either of them; so that if any Priests alive call themselves God's *certain Ambassadors*, they must show *Credentials* that *certainly* came from Heaven, or from a Church that never told a Lye, or did err; otherwise such Pretences are insolent, vain, nonsensical and impudent Priest-craft.

One of the Plagues of *Egypt* was *Locusts and Caterpillars*; and Travel over the greatest part of Christendom, as I have done, and tell me if ever you saw a Fryary, an Abbacy, a Priory, or Monastery, or other Seat of Ecclesiastical Revenue, but it was chosen and pick'd out of the fattest, the greenest, the pleasantest, and fruitfulest Situation in that whole Country, which used to be eaten up and devoured by Ecclesiastical Locusts and Caterpillars.

Infomuch, that the very Papists were glad to make Statutes of *Mortmayn*, and to little Purpose, for the State had been in the Church of England, and not the Church in the State, if Henry VIII. and his Parliament, had not found it necessary to make an *Act of Resumption*; which Priest craft still calls *Sacrilege*, *Sacrilege*, a Bugbear Word to fright Bigots, Women and Fools.

When the most Christian King takes the Plate out of their Rich Monasteries, and their Moneys too, when he wants it, and sends it to *Tekely, Berezini, or Ragotzi*, as a *Sacrifice* to his Ambition, not Religion, dare the Jesuits exclaim and cry out (as our *unthinking Coxcombs* do, on like occasion) *Sacrilege, Sacrilege*; no, the Jesuits have more wit, than to think that great King has so little wit, to be fool'd out of his Purchase, and Acts of Resumption, with a Word that Priest-craft has Categorized *Sacrilege* as the greatest Sin, next to the *sin against the Holy Ghost*.

How now? hands off; what do you invade God's Patrimony, or St. Peter's Patrimony? Oh! vile Infidels, as bad as *Lemingen*. But if the French King Invade without putting off his Hat, or saying, *by your leave*, not a word dare they mutter, but—*Mum*; for he knows, as all wise Men know, that there must go two words to a Bargain.

A cheating Shop-keeper, or a rapacious Soldier, (that will ravage, plunder, and spoil, and butcher Men, with as little Remorse, for as little Mony, as a Butcher will kill a Calf) a Prince his Miss, that got Lands and Dukedoms by her Sin and Shame. All these, on their Death-beds, (the best Harvest-time in all the year for Priest-Craft to improve) and go snips and half-shares with the Sinners; by scaring them out of their Estates, with that best of Priest-Craft Cheats, *Purgatory*. Oh! the Riches that are to be got with a Lye, called, to sanctifie it, *pia fraud*, or cheating in *God's Name*.

One would wonder that any Bigot should be so senseless as to call an *Act of Resumption* Sacrilege, Sacrilege, in such said Cases. For who told you, that the God of Truth, the Holy One, that hates Iniquity from all Eternity, should approve, that his Holy Name should be used (or rather abused) to vouch a Cheat and a Lye?

Priest-Craft says, that the Sinners did bequeath these Estates, robbing their Children, for God's sake, to give them to Ecclesiastical Locusts and Caterpillars, calling them *Deodands*, or *given to God*; that's the *Priest craft word*. But, I said before, there must go *two words to this Bargain* also; namely a word from God, *accipio*, I accept this Gift; whereas I know to the contrary, that he does not accept, but scorn that the *price of a Dog*, or a *Whore*, should come into the Treasury of the Lord.

So that, in short, Priest-craft is *born and bred* betwixt *Hope and Fear*; *Hope* of getting *Riches*, *Fear* of *Poverty* (that *Hag*) tempts Men, (as *Agar* says in the Book of *Proverbs*, 30. 9.) to *Steal* and *take the Name of God in vain*; that is, be *Hypocrites*, or guilty of *Priest-craft*; therefore, for a *Farewel*, my *Muse* must make a *Remonstrance*.

TO
Madam Poverty.

A
SATYR.

A Vaunt ! thou Brat of Hell ! when Devils
(meant
To plague Men, Thee (the worst of plagues) they
(sent.

Other Plagues kill, Thou makes Men (lingring) die,
And, by slow Deaths, dost kill and crucifie,

Or, like the *French* Mode, breaks them *on the Wheel*,

That they may *Taste* their Death, as well as *Feel*.

Here in most dismal holes of Earth thou dwells,

In Caves, as Hermits, Wilderness, and Cells ;

In Graves, and where (alive) Men buried be,

Prisons (I mean) *Scotland* and *Muscovy* :

Horrid thy Visage is, ghastful, forlorn,

Thy (*worse than Gibbet*-) Rags lowlie and torn.

Worse than the Pox, Whores hate thee, and will lose

Their Souls, (or what they value more) their Nose.

Rather than suffer thy more loathed Looks,

Mechanicks sell their Tools, Scholars their Books.

No walking Ghosts, nor Furies, (which are three)

Nor Devils, unto Men, more dreadful be,

Than this more hellish, devilish Poverty.

The Stars of Heaven might there in quiet stay,

And not from thence (by Cheats) be fetch'd away,

To

To vouch a *Lye* (I mean) an *Almanack*,
 If the *poor Wizards* did not Money lack :
 Nor *Ambodexter Lawyers* take a Fee
 On both sides ; *This* to plead : *That* dumb to be.
 Nor *Switz* their Fathers fight, nor kill their Brother,
 For fear of Thee, murtherring one another.
 No Son would turn his Father out of Door,
 But that the Bastard dreads he should be Poor.
 The *Stage of Mountebanks* would empty be,
 And *Pulpits* too, were't not for fear of Thee ;
 Whose *Voice* more frightful isthan *Guns*, and louder,
 Even Soldiers dread thee more than Gunpowder :
 To have their Limbs blown up to Heaven they chuse,
 Run into Cannons Mouths, they ne'er refuse,
 So they can 'scape Thee. Men might live to see
 Old Age, were't not for the Doctor's Fee and Thee.
Churchwardens that ne'er pray but at Church-Door,
 Cannot forget to---pray--- Remember the Poor ;
 But

But him that holds the Box they *whispering* meant,
 To pay Queen's Taxes and the Landlord's Rent.
 No Tradesmen selling Wares their Souls would sell,
 But that they fear thee more than Devils and Hell.
 What Curates would the Prayers read to Sinners
 Were't not in hopes of Six-pence and their Dinners?
 And Souls in Purgatory still might lie,
 And might (in worse than Kitchen-Fire) fry,
 If there could not be found here such an Ass,
 To Bribe the *Pope* with Money for *each Mass*,
 Would *Pinkethman* vouchsafe to make such Faces,
 And screw his Chaps into such feat Grimaces,
 To make Fools laugh, in a more foolish Age,
 Were't not to kick grim Poverty off the Stage,
 Thus *Holderforth*, (lest meager Jaws should pine,)
 Will *bawl* to th' Petticoats, *Snivel* and *Whine*,
 In hopes to drive lean *Poverty* away,
 The Curate (whilst the Doctor sleeps) must pray.
Glut-

Gluttonous *Monks* make love to *Poverty*,
 Their love (alas!) is mere Hypocrisy.
 Thou Gilt! *Dol Common*, hated too of *All*,
 Except the *Poets* and the *Prodigal*.
 The naked *Indians* (that nothing have,
 Yet want for nothing, nothing do they crave)
 Did never know the *Plague* of *Poverty*,
 Which never comes, except by *Luxury*.
 For *Mother Earth* Men, Birds, and Beasts still feeds,
 And never fails to suckle *All* she Breeds.
 No Judge upon the *Bench* but would be loath
 To break his *Own* (as well as the *King's*) Oath,
 By being *damn'd* for *Partiality*;
 Nor, those at *Bar*, instead of Pleading, *Lye*,
 Were it not for the fear of *Poverty*.
 And I (perhaps too) now should *silent* be,
 Were't not to get the *Pence*, for fear of Thee.

And

And now, perhaps some *Priests* will *dislike* this *Picture* of *Priest-craft*, *the more* for being *like*, or drawn *to the Life*: In this *little Mirror*, beholding their *own features*, they will be apt to break the *Glass* that kindly shows them their *Black-patches*, which in former times have been taken for *Beauty-spots*; and in a *fret and ferment*, perhaps, call for his *Weapons* (I mean) his *Pen* to attack me.

The *shortest way* to Answer that and the like *Characters of Priest-craft*, is to get (as formerly) a *Monopoly* of the *Press*, if it be not against the *Liberties* of the *Subject*, and (consequently) *unreasonable*; trusting the *Keys* of the *Press* to some *Confiding Priests*, that alone may *open and shut* the *Press* doors against all *Divinity* (how sacred soever) that makes not for their *own Turns* and *Grandeur*.

Thus the *Pope* keeps an *Index Expurgatorius*: Thus *Cowards* (conscious of their own *baseness*) gets a *Friend* to *tye* his *Enemies Hands*, and thereby his *Victory* is *easy*, as well as *certain*; they may well win that *bowl* alone.

But *naked Truth* knows her own *Strength* as well as *Beauty*; and therefore is neither *afraid* nor *ashamed* to appear in *publick* and *bare-fac'd*; whereas *Priest-craft* (conscious of its own *Deformities* and *Defects*) trembles to be *expos'd* and brought to *open light* and *view*; especially in a *Church* that pretends not to *Infallibility*, and perhaps conscious of her own *Frailties*, which (like other *Diseases*) can never be *cured* till they are *made known*.

Will an *honest Patient* (except he be *crazy*) fight his *Physician*, shut up his *Mouth*, and not taste a drop, or spill the *Physick*? This is like the *Dog* in the *Manger*, neither eat *Hay* himself, nor suffer such to eat that would be glad of it.

If the *Author*, the *Printer*, and the *Bookseller*, subscribe their *Names*, it is as much as to say, *We will stand by it*; thereby all *Libels*, or licentious *Wantonness in Print*, is better obviated than *Words of Mouth*, and can do less harm.

All other *Restraint* of the *Press* seems to some *Politicians* (that are neither *Bigots* nor *Priest-ridden*) to be *All* that is either *reasonable* or *needful*. To affirm, That there are *Antipodes*, was once (by the *Infalible Pope*) condemn'd for *Heresy*.

The *Restraint of the Press* prohibits the *Advancement of Learning*, and the *improvement of all useful Arts and Sciences*.

Is it a *Sin* to see *further* than an old Fellow that is forced to use *Spectacles*, though he happen to *stand aloft*? Does the *Sun* communicate his *Beams* only to those that happen to *crawl up* to the *Top* of the *Steeple*? It is unaccountable to hoodwink those that happen to see our Deformities, much more therefore to put out their Eyes. This is a *Master-piece* in Priest-craft, and gives it a *Safeguard*, a *Protection*, and a *License to Cheat*.

For all sorts of Priest-craft are of one *Leven* and one *Batch*: All (as well as the *Popish*) hold infallibly, That *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*; a *Doctrine* which all Priests are ashamed to preach up, but a *Doctrine* of which they make the greatest *Use*. Or else they would never be so zealous, *Tooth and Nail*, for reviving that dead Statute made for the *Restraint of the Press*; and that no Divinity may pass for *Current*, but only that which has the *Stamp* or *Imprimatur* of some trusty *Roger*, though *Le Strange* be dead.

This is the very *Doctrine* and *Policy* of the *Turks Pope* (the *Musti*) who *prohibits* all *Printing*, that the People may be kept in *Ignorance*; for which reason also, the *Pope of Rome* prohibits all *Common-Prayers*, except the *Latin Mass*, that the Mob may the more devoutly pray, with *Signs of the Cross* only, and other dumb shows: Who can quarrel with an *Ave Maria*, or *Pater noster*, that does not understand one word of them? 'Tis best cheating and picking of Pockets in the *Night*, or in the *Dark*, and dim *Twilight*.

And, as for my part, I care not one Farthing, if that Statute of laying an *Embargo* upon the *Printing-Press* (though now dead) had to Morrow a Resurrection: As for my *Peck of Malt*, set the *Kiln on Fire*; I would not vouchsafe to blunt a *Pen*, in a silly and ungrateful Age, only to get *Money*, or a *Name*; I have enough (if not too much) of both already; and more than I covet or desire. And my many Children are all well provided for, I thank God.

Had it not been for this same *new Invention* of *Printing* (which whether it has done more mischief to the World than *Gun-powder*, another *new Invention* almost of the same date) is a Question, and by the Learned left as a *Moot-Case* undecided to this Day. *Martin Luther* and *John Calvin*, (both *Popish-Priests*) might have scribbled to little purpose, and *Popish Priest-craft* might have gull'd and bejuggl'd the unthinking World (for ought I know) to this Day.

Luther first appear'd, and rose like another North-Star, to enlighten all Denmark, and all Sweden, and a great part of France and Germany, especially the Electorates of Brandenburg, (now) Hanover and Saxony; in which last named Electorate, not a Man or Woman has fallen away to Popish Priest Craft, except one of late, who has deem'd it Policy, if not Piety, to make a blessed exchange from an Elector, to that of King, for the better sound sake, at least.

To extinguish Luther's Light, the College of Cardinals was consulted by the Pope, and some was for stopping Luther's Mouth with a fat Bishoprick, till another wiser Cardinal stood up, saying, *Germanica illa Bestia non curat Auram*: That German Boar values not Gold.

Both Luther and Calvin happen'd to appear in a most happy Configuration or Constellation, to bring in, not so much a new Christian Religion, as an old one new furnished and new filed from the corroding Rust.

Luther (a Priest) refines, by Divine Chymistry, the Popish Priestcraft; and Calvin refines the Refiner, as if Luther's Consubstantiation bordered too near upon the Waser-God Transubstantiation; both of them at Daggers drawing between themselves, but well united and agreed against Popish Priest-craft.

Which had grated so hard and heavy with their Bulls, and Excommunications, and Extortions, and also upon the Emperors and Electors of Germany, and also upon Denmark and Sweden, that one King of Swedes defied the Pope and all his Works, in a Letter, (when the Pope sent to him to pay Peter-pence) with these very Words, *Habui à Populo Regnum meum, à Parentibus Vitam, à Roma Religionem, quam, si mihi Invidias, tibi Renuncio per presentes.*

Which I'll English thus.

I, by my People's Gift, a Kingdom have;
My Parents Life; Rome my Religion gave;
Which if thou grudgest to bestow on me,
I, by these presents, do Renounce to thee.

By

By which it plainly appears, that both Kings and People were weary of the Thralldom and Oppression of *Popish Priest-craft*; and happy was he that could first get rid on't: a drowning Man will lay hold of any Twig, though it help, perhaps, the more to sink him.

John Calvin met with as happy a Juncture at *Geneva*, where the Mob made a *General Insurrection* against the Bishop of *Geneva*, for his insufferable Tyranny and *Priest-craft Insolence*, which no Patience could endure; and therefore they banished the Bishop, and amongst themselves shared the Bishop's Lands, which were great, and a Temptation to Mutiny, if not to Rebellion.

This done, and all at peace and quiet, and every Body very well pleased, and wanted nothing, till at length they bethought themselves, and found that they wanted a *Religion*: For want *whereof* they were almost out of their little Wits, when the Senate came to ponder and consult of what was done.

To continue Slaves to *Popish Priest-craft* they thought was worse than Death, and the worst that could befall them; therefore in the first Place they made it to be, by Statute-Law, High-Treason, to recal, or contribute, in Word or Deed, to the Restauration of the Abdicated Bishop; judging, that if he was, as they thought him, a Tyrant before his Exile, he could rage no less than a roaring Lyon, or a Devil Incarnate, *after his Return* and Restauration; besides (which stuck upon their Stomach heavily) the *Bishop's Lands* must be restored and *refunded*; this could not be digested; nor any such *Act of Resumption*.

And to continue Papists, that was not safe; they well knowing, that the Pope would have his *banished Son* (the Bishop) *restored* with Compensation for his Losses *in statu quo*.

And to turn *Lutherans* was but out of the Frying-pan into the Fire, some thought; and the *Lutheran Priest-craft* (though a thousand times more easie than *Popish Priest-craft*, yet) they did not know how time might degenerate it to so much Tyranny, that never a Barrel a better Herring.

In this *Quandare*, as the Senate was *non-plus'd*, and at their Wits end, luckily steps in *John Calvin*, a cunning Man, a great Scholar; and, above all, a *reaching Noddle*, far above vulgar Apprehension.

Geneva had not, with their Bishop, exiled also *Christianity* in the least; the *Christian Priest craft* only was the Disease that troubled them. Which *John Calvin* no sooner perceived, but he applied a Remedy that seemed very pleasant to the *Gusto* of the Laity, and which therefore went merrily down. But *Calvin*, like another *Moses* (if so disproportionable a Comparison be not odious) did not forget *his own Tribe*, the Priests, or *Tribe of Levi*, which had a double Portion, and twice as much more than any of the *Lay-Tribes*, Num. 35. 7. namely, a goodly Glebe, viz. 48 Cities, and not only the Tenth of their Lands, but the Tenth of their Labour and Increase, which is sometimes worth more than the Lands; and all this by God's Appointment: Even so, *Calvin* did not forget the *Presbyters* and *Priests*, (which are but two Names for one and the same thing;) but because the Name of *Priest* (by reason of the Tyranny of late *Popish Priest-craft*) was odious, he put the change upon the unthinking Senate; and ordain'd a *Presbyter* or *Elder* in the room of every *Parish Priest*, and two *Lay-Elders*, (a Name not found in Holy Writ, but pious Mr. *Calvin* was the first *Godfather*, and gave them that Name) and vouchsafed them equal Authority with the *Clergy-Presbyter*; two to one, that's very good, says the *short-sighted Senate*; no fear of being any more oppressed with *Priest-craft*; for Mr. *Calvin* allows us two *Lay Votes* to one *Clergy Vote*; we are safe enough from *Priest-craft*, by what Name or Title soever dignified or distinguished.

But, alas! they found (*too late*) that *Calvin* had out-witted them; for though the *Lay-Elders* had equal Power and Authority to Curse, and Damn, Anathematize, Excommunicate and absolve; yet those *Lay-Elders* were forced to be good in their Offices, for they knew not how long they should stay in them; their Office lasting no longer than the Consuls at *Rome* (every Year two new Ones) whilst the *Clergy-Presbyter* or *Elder*, was like the perpetual Dictator, for Term of Life. So that in a Year or two they found too late, that they had with all this pother, got nothing but the *Bishop's Lands*, for every *Parish* had a *Bishop*, or rather a *Pope*.

*As fierce and Rigid in his Place,
As Hildebrand or Boniface.*

So the *Mob* was in an *Uproar*, hollowing out with full cry and open Mouth against poor *Calvin*, In *Rhodanum*, in *Rhodanum*, Throw him into the River; but he was let down over the Wall, like *St. Paul*, in a Basket, by his *Bigot-Disciples*, and escaped their hands.

So fare him well, you'll say: But I say, No. And so said the Senate and *Common Council* of the City of *Geneva*. For though some were of Opinion, that they had better have no Religion, than a false one, either *Popish* or *Presbyterian* Priest craft, and to take away from the Priests, all their Power of Excommunicating and doing Mischief; and also (what the Priests valued *more*, and more bewailed the loss of) their *Tythes and Revenues*; as now do the wise *States of Holland*, allowing the Priest, or Presbyters abundance of *Respect*, but little, very little Pensions (paid out of the Treasury or Exchequer; and consequently they keep the Presbyter, not only *under*, but at *their beck*; and to Fast, and Preach, and Pray, just as the *Hogen Mogen States* shall annuate and direct. Yet the major part of the *Common Council* wanting foresight, called back from Exile Mr. *Calvin*, who refused to come, unless they would establish, by a *Solemn League and Covenant* (and *irrepealable Statute Law*) his *rigid Presbyterian Government*, of which he would not abate one Tittle.

This *Presbyterian Government*, and the *Solemn League and Covenant*, not unlike the *Holy League* in *France*, in *Henry III.* Reign, Mr. *Knox* did Copy and brought into *Scotland*, where it is rampant to this Day, and *more rigid* than the *Inquisition* in *Spain*, with the additional *Bigotism* of *Sabathising*; a piece of *Jewish Devotion* laugh'd at in *Holland*, and derided even in *Geneva*, where, after Evening-Service they go to Bowls, and other sportive Exercises every *Sunday*, no Man forbidding them. Let him that would be cured of this *Jewish Bigotism*, read *1 Maccabees* 2. 31. to 47. and *Mar.* 2. 27, 28.

The *Scots* did not only transplant their *Solemn League and Covenant* from *Geneva*, but with Sword and Gun, as in *France* with Dragoons, abundance of *New Converts* in *England* were made, and swore to it (History says, for I was not old enough to take or refuse it) generally, in every Parish in *England*; till *Oliver Cromwell* sent them home with a *Vengeance*, when they came to demand the other Moiety of the price of Blood, for which they sold their King; and I, amongst the rest, (young as I was then) lent *Cromwell* my little helping hand in this Work; and *Presbyterian Priest-craft* has dwindled.

dwindled to nothing ever since, in *England* I mean. But it is *triumphant* still in *Scotland*, tho' a Burthen that neither *they nor their Fathers* were able to bear; I speak experimentally, having lived longer in *Scotland*, than in any other Country or Kingdom in *all* my Travels, except *England*.

The truth is, the *Ignorance of the Laity* (in *Presbyterian* and *Popish* Countries) is the very *life and soul* of all Priestcraft, *without which* no manner of Priestcraft could *live and move or have its being*.

Juglers play their *Tricks* (to chuse) by Candle-light, or dim Lamp-light; and Jades are found to be unruly and untractable in a Horse Mill, till they be blinded. Just so the *Populace*, till they be *blindfolded*, you can never *lead them by the Nose*.

This was the very *Quintessence* of the Policy of the *Philistines*; they could never lead the great Booby *Sampson* quietly, about and about, until they put out the *Gyant's Eyes*; who dyed in *Faith*, but not in *Charity*, but *Malice*, to be *revenged* for his two Eyes.

And can any body be so base as to think that *our Priests* have less Wit than the *Philistines*, or the *Mahometan Musti*, or the *Christian Pope* at *Rome*.

Ay, ay, go on; and muzzle some Priest-ridden Politicians to saddle their own Backs, whilst we get up and ride, and once more, if it be not contrary to the Laws, and the Reason of the Laws against *Monopolies and Liberty of Conscience*, to give (I say Power and Authority, by Statute-Law, if possible) to some few, confiding and trusty *Rogers* to be the *only Porters* to keep the Keys of the Printing-Press (as the Pope keeps the Keys, they say, of Heaven-Gates, being *Vice-Porter* under *St. Peter*) and that none enter *without a Ticket* from them; even as in *Muscovy* none can enter Heaven (they think) without a Passport put into the dead Man's Hand, or tied to it, after he is deceas'd, by the Priest, with a Superscription to *St. Nicholas*, the Patron of *Muscovy*, to let him in; for *St. Nicholas* is the chief Porter to admit Souls into Heaven, they think, as devoutly, as any Papist thinks with reverence and adoration of *St. Peter*; Priestcraft all; for the Friends of the Deceased pay the *Muscovy Priest* for the Ticket, as much as the price of a Mass in *Spain*, a *Ryal*, or Six-pence *Sterling*.

And, let our High-Priests get a Law, if they can, to Monopolize the Printing-Press, and silencing also all Preaching, that do *not conform* to their *Placeats*, if it can be done without invading the
the

the established Laws for liberty of *both*; otherwise I am afraid our Priest-craft cannot be (without a Miracle) long liv'd.

After that a Jugler's cheating Tricks are discovered and seen into, he may even *put up* his Balls and his Trinkets and go to another Fair, the Market is over; he must go and make Fools, and get Wealth by his Craft in *some other Country*.

The *West-Indies* (for all Religion, like the Sun, moves, as all other Arts and Sciences, *Westwards*) I fancy to be the *fittest Stage* for our *High-Flyers*; because this is a prying Age, and Scholarship and Craft is not now (as once of old) confin'd to a Cassock, or Scotch cloath Sleeves. Our Nobility and Gentry (like King *Henry I. of England*) Pride themselves (and not without cause neither) with the Sirname of *Beau-Clerks*.

We have every new Parliament, a new Convocation chosen: For what purpose? To quarrel with one another? The nether House (bold Priests!) against the upper House; but, in all my Observation, in my Time, I never heard, that in making any Statutes about Religion, the Parliament never so much as once asked there advice, but there they sit and tell Stories: And who minds them? And so let them Bandy against one another till I part them.

But, my Bretheren, take *my Advice*, I *give it* (which Lawyers seldom will) *without a Fee*: If perchance any good natur'd Bigot, or gentle Priest-ridden Politician will permit us to get up and ride; let us not use him, as we used to abuse our *Cambridge Hackneys*, and ride a Gallop, like Saylor, Weavers, and Taylors, and Full-speed, lest the Jade be spur-gall'd and tyr'd, and throw us down. You are great Scholars, I grant, and rare Politicians, especially the *High-flown Churchman*; for all Priest-craft (of all Religions, in all Ages and Nations in the World) has been managed by the most *refined Head pieces* of each Country, as well as *now in England*.

Pope *Joan* was chosen to the Infallible Chair (was not the *Feminine Gender* then in *Italy* more worthy than the *Masculine*, as at this Day in *England*, where the *Petticoat* wears the *Breeches*, in spite of *Lilly* and his Grammar) meerly for her transcendent Virtues and Scholarship above the Males: So the *Sybils*, and *Deborah* and *Miriam*, and all the Prophetesses, as well as the Prophets, have been chosen and renowned for their Wit and Valour.

'Tis

'Tis Merit alone, when other Titles are disputable, that justly advances People (without distinction of Sex) to the Supremacy. Did not *Judith* vanquish *Holofernes*, when all the Men in *Judea* could not do it? And did not Queen *Thomyris*, conquer that *Hector* of the World, when no Kings in the World could do it? as aforesaid.

And you, most Learned Church-men and High-Flyers, you are pickt out of the vulgar, like *Jewels* out of a Dunghil, and advanc'd to the Cabinets of Princes; see hence the value and esteem that our Nation (as well as all other Nations of the Earth) set upon Wit and Scholarship.

Thus *Julius Caesar* was chosen to be Pope of *Rome* (*Pontifex Maximus*) meerly for his Scholarship, before he came to be the first and greatest of the *Roman* Emperors; being as illustrious for the *Word* as the *Sword*, the *Pen* as the *Pike*.

Why should not you *Rule the Roast*, as well as the *Druides* amongst the *Gauls*, the *Musti* amongst the *Mahometans*, the *Gymnosophists*, and *Egyptian Priests*: *Cunning Gypsies* all!

But you will spoil all this fine Character I have frankly bestowed upon you, if you answer and confute this Character of *Priest-craft*, as you did my *Naked Truth*, *Black Nonconformist*, and *Ceremony-monger*, not as Gentlemen and Scholars, but (*Craven like*) calling upon the *Jaylors*, the *Sumners*, the *Rascals*, the *Robin Hogs*, and *Bumbailiffs*, to help you to smother a Book, and stop it in the Press, when you your selves had not *Leisure* (I do not say *Skill*) to confute the same *otherwise*; nor with any other *Attacks* than what God Almighty has permitted the Devil and his Instrument to assault me with, namely, the Rhetorick of *Billingsgate*, viz. *Lying and Slandering*: (it's well it's no worse.)

For though it pleases Providence, for the exercise of my Patience and Charity, to suffer the Dogs to *Bark* at me; yet the Curs are so *muzzled* by my Innocence, (which I would scorn to mention on any other occasion) that for their Hearts their Malice cannot prove that ever I broke *any one* Law of the Land, since I entred into *Holy Orders*. I cannot justify *now*, what I did when I was a Soldier, and Captain (by Sea and Land) under *Carolus Gustavus* King of *Swedes*, and his darling Friend *Oliver Cromwel*, for

Delus

Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirit ?

*Deceit and Valour in the Wars,
Is found in those that follow Mars.*

But 'tis no matter, I am but right serv'd, I confess, who bid me Write or Print? as *Tantivee* well says, in a silly and unthinking Age, I thank him for the *Memento*, I should not so soon have done else.

Priest-craft (of all false Religions in the World) is confessed to be nothing else but (*pious fraud*) a meer Cheat. *Mahomet* was an *impudent* Cheat too, finding the Mountain did not budge at his Call, as he had promised that it should to his Hearers, without Blushing or being non-plus'd, only said, *If the Mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the Mountain*; and so the business (by the silly Mob) was contentedly hush'd up.

But it cannot be denied also, that through the sin and frailty of the high-flown High-Priests especially, for they guided the small *Craftsmen* under them, and the little *Curates*; many a *sinful Job* was done, even in a Religion of God's own making, and an High-Priest, not chosen as Popes are, in a wrangling Conclave; or, as some say, here in *England*, by the Recommendation of Father *Peters*, or a *Favourite Whore*; a most infallible and godly Call, to the chief Place in God's Church, I mean, to the place (whither the Devil carried our blessed Saviour, and set him) upon the Pinnacles of the Temple, and there left him. I say, Frailties in an High Priest made rightly by God, and consecrated or ordain'd by the Magistrate, his Brother *Moses*, namely, *Aaron*, was none of the best; who, together with a Woman, that belong'd to the Priest craft too, a Prophetess, *Miriam* by Name, plotted a Rebellion against him, most ungratefully, that was not only their own Brother, (but Ambition never stumbles at natural Affection, though it happen to lie in its way) *Moses*, who also advanc'd them (the one to be Pope, and the other Pope *Joan*) and set them above all Men, except himself. Except himself! why that's the business, and the only cause of all that blood-shed and Civil Wars betwixt *Cesar* and *Pompey*; and many other Princes, that I could name.

H

To

To dethrone his Brother *Moses* it was decreed ; but how to colour the Rebellion, there's the Craft, ay, and there's the Priest-craft and the Devil (always) at a Rebels Elbow : The Devil is the chief Engineer in all Rebellions ; but Priest-craft is always in the Plot to cover and hide his *Cloven-foot* : The Devil himself never yet had *wit enough* to carry on a Rebellion without the Aid and Assistance of Priest-craft. *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram* rebelled too, and Priests all.

And *Moses* (as well as a *late King of England*) was more plagu'd with Priests of his own Advancement than any other) witness the Rebellion of *Aaron, Miriam, Corah, Dathan and Abiram*, all of them belonging to the Church, and to its secret Mysteries, into which, if any of the *Laiety* durst peep, *Moses* wisely ordered he should pay dear for his peeping, and *be slain*, Numb. 18. 7.

Religion then (that old cover for all Rebellions) was the word, for *Moses* had married a *Blackamoor* ; but it was before his own Law was promulgated or made, against marrying of strange Wives ; and where there is no Law, there is no Transgression : But *Aaron*, besides Rebellion, set up Heresy and Idolatry, and brought a new Religion, the *Golden Calf*.

King *Saul* found to his Cost, that he had better have displeas'd all *Israel*, than *Samuel*, the good High-priest ; and had better have rent the Cloathes off from his own back, than have rent *Samuel's* Cassock, made of rotten black Cloth, perhaps, or else it would not have rent, by laying hold of it ; but it fretted the good old Gentleman, and in a Passion, he said, *God hath rent from thee the Kingdom also, and hath given it to thy Neighbour that is better than thou*, 1 Sam. 15. 28.

And who *that better Neighbour* was, the High-priest could not tell but some body must be ; yet, whether *Eliab* or *Abinadab*, or any other Son of *Jesse* (for they were all jolly good-like Men) *Samuel* knew not.

And no doubt but *David*, though a little Man, was as much fam'd in the Country for a strong Man, in killing a Lyon and a Bear, Hand to Fist, at least as famously as *Joy the Strong Man of Kent*. But that which troubled the High-priest most, was, lest the King should hear of a new Lord's Anointed, and so kill him, 1 Sam. 16. 2.

Just thus, now, would King *Augustus* kill the High-Priest of *Poland*, the Cardinal Primate, for setting up a *Perkin* or a *Stanislaus*, if he could catch the good Bishop, who had sworn (as other Bishops often have done to other Kings that shall be nameless) to his King *Augustus*, in his Oath of Allegiance.

Then the Lord answered, Take an Heifer with thee, and say, I am come to do Sacrifice to the Lord: The Policy of Heaven, we see, jumps with our late Priest-craft, in this, To make Religion (the common covert to hide a Plot, a true godly Plot) Religion, Religion, the Church, the Church, which (like Charity) hides a multitude of Sins.

And the Prophet (as well as King) *David*, when he came to *Abimilech* the Priest, with a great Lye in his Mouth, 1 Sam. 21. 2. made bold to dispense with one of God's Commandments, *Exod.* 29. 33. and to crack a Commandment, let the Priest say what he would, though a bloody Craft it prov'd to the poor Priest *Abimilech*, 1 Sam. 22. 18, 19. and all his innocent Wives, Children, and Servants, Ox and Ass.

And the Politicians and Princes of a false Religion have made use of Priest-craft to hallow their Enterprizes, Wars and Bloodshed, by sending *Nuncio's* (not empty handed, but with Presents to the Oracles of *Apollo*, which had learnt thereby *Philipizare*) as *Demosthenes* said on the like occasion, concerning *Philip* King of *Macedon*, the reputed Father of *Alexander the Great*, though indeed he was the Son of a Whore, if the flattering Priest did not Lye, when he called him, in his first Address and Salutation: Oh! thou Son of God: Son of God, a Title that Priest-craft bestowed upon him, and he accepted the Godship and Adoration with as much Devotion, as *Herod* that was eaten up of Worms; or, a neighbouring King in our Days: But *Alexander* had rather be accounted a Bastard, than not to be said of God's begetting.

And so also Politicians and Princes of the true Religion have used to hallow and sanctifie a bloodshed upon Innocents, with consulting with their own Priests first, as *David*, before he attempted to cut off all Pretenders to the Crown, did not run bluntly to work, and of his own Head (as the *Turkish* Sultans used to do) Bow-string them; No, He first asked the Opinion of the Priest, or asking Council of the Lord, 2 Sam. 21. 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. But *David* spared the Cripple *Mephibosheth*, that cou'd

not hurt him; and to make amends, he gathered the Bones of them that were hanged, and the Bones of their Father and Grandfather King Saul, and also the Bones of his dear Friend Jonathan, and buried them in the Tomb of old Kish, Saul's Father.

For this cause the Holy Scripture calls King David a Man after God's own Heart, and that would fulfil all God's Will; that is, when Almighty God's Holy Priest bid him kill and slay, so he will, and not stand disputing, shall I? shall I? as King Saul did, sparing King Agag's Life, and the Lives of the fattest Bullocks and Sheep, to present to the Priest, for a Sacrifice to the Lord his God; when the Priest had (by order from Almighty God) commanded the King to slay the Amalekites, for an old done Deed, that never a Man of Amalek, Woman, nor Child had any hand in, for Amalek, was the Grandchild of Esau, and fought with Israel as they came out of Egypt hundreds of Years, before King Agag and his People were born, and it seems against God's own Oath; As I live, saith the Lord, there shall be no more this Proverb amongst you, The Fathers have eaten sower Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on edge; no, no, there's neither Conscience, Justice, Reason, nor Equity in that, let Priest-craft say what it will; for God saith, The Soul that sinneth shall die; not the innocent Soul that had neither Will nor Skill, Hand nor Head, nor Heart in a Murder, (if it were Murder to kill in Battle an Enemy) by the Law of Arms.

But the High-Priest Samuel commanded King Saul, saying, 1 Sam. 15. 1, 2. Thus saith the Lord, I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how they laid an Ambush for them in the way, as they came up from Egypt. Now, therefore, go and smite Amalek, and destroy ye all that pertaineth unto them, and have no Compassion on them, but slay both Man and Woman, both Infant and Suckling, both Ox and Sheep, Camel and Ass.

And Saul, for disobeying Samuel's Injunctions, which Almighty God had given Orders for, and for having Compassion, more than was licenced; by sparing the better part, lost his Kingdom, which was given to David, because he was a Man after God's own Heart (not in Holiness, that is not meant, for besides his Adultery and Murder, his many other Sins, as cursing his Enemies to the Pit of Hell, is unaccountable, but after God's own Heart) is

an

an Hebraism, and in *English* signifies as much as, *a Man for my turn*, he will kill and slay as the Priest annuates and directs, by orders received from Heaven; *He will fulfil all my Will*, saith the High-Priest.

And some observe, that though King *David* was an excellent Man, no doubt, and a great Prophet, as well as a King, yet when our blessed Saviour and his Apostles had occasion to mention him, they do not give him the Epithet of *Holy David*, but plain *David*, not, as *we* (especially the *Welch-Men*, on the first Day of *March* yearly, honouring his blessed Memory with a Leek on *St. Taffee's* (or *St. David's*) Day; but we dare not deny, but that he may be called, *a Man of Blood*, as God Almighty calls him; and therefore not capable nor qualified to build God's Holy Temple; but *Solomon* is surrogated by God, in his stead, to the Holy Work: And yet, even he, (which perhaps the Holy Seer, *Nathan* the Prophet did not foresee) prov'd bad enough in all Conscience; for, after that God Almighty had appeared to him twice, yet notwithstanding, *Solomon* turn'd, like *Julian*, an *Apostate*, without Repentance (saith *St. Austin*) at least without any mention of his Repentance for that *Apostacy*, which stands upon Record, uncanceled, in *Holy Writ*.

Holy Writ tells us, that the Devil is come down, having great Wrath, because he knows, that *his time is short*; and therefore rises betimes, and goes early to work to do mischief.

Just so, the Devil's Imps (*Lyars* and *Slanderers*) if they be to answer an honest *Book* (in Print,) or an honest *Cause* to confute at the Bar, the very first thing they do, is (*Machiavel's Policy*, *Calumniari fortitè & aliquid adhibebit*) to throw Dirt enough and bespatter their Adversary, or array him in a Bear-Skin, and then his business is done; every Cur will have a snap at him to worry him.

A great *Master of Art* in this kind of Craft of Pleading was one whose Name, for decency sake, I conceal; it stinks so to all Posterity. Besides, he is dead and gone; but he has left Imps behind him, that follow the same devilish Methods of *Lying* and *Reviling*, and find them very successful, I know it too experimentally.

For

For that same *Bawling*——whose Tongue was as clamorous and loud almost as *Tom a Lincoln*, rung a Peal in my Years at *Chelmsford*, with a noise of Twenty Four Articles to prove *Barretry*, forsooth, against me, and not being able (though he had a hundred Witnesses against me) to prove the least Tittle of any, hoping, I suppose, to run me down, as Boys do Squirrels, only with a Noise, till at length he was forced to throw away his Breviates, and sit down and weep; for I made him, in effect, say, *Tongue thou liest*.

This silly World is come to a fine pass, I am glad I am so near going out of it. All have liberty (and right as *Englishmen*) to plead their own Cause, a liberty that even Heathens never denied (*for does our Law condemn a Man before it hear him, and know what he does*) a Liberty, tho' that has lately been denied me, against all Law, Reason, and Justice; and a Liberty which all *Englishmen* are concerned in, and ought to vindicate; but of that in another place.

Why, say some, *your Council shall speak for you*; Council speak! Why? Will Council open their Mouths without a Golden Key? (*that is not the fashion*.) And suppose I have no Money or Gold to spare, or to throw away; must a Man be rob'd of his Birth-right, of his little Estate, because he is poor? This is to rob the Spittle or Hospital. Besides, who ought to be forced to read with Spectacles, that have as good Eyes as mine? who will go upon Stilts or Churches, that has good Legs of his own? or, be forced to ride a Hackney, or in a Hackney-Coach, that keeps a good one of his own? Let partial and unjust Judges read *Flet. lib. 1. cap. 17. de Justitiariis*. Almighty God shall be their *Index* and *Vindex*, and *Testis* too, against all partial, peevish, and malicious Justices, that are grown so proud, that they *fear not God, nor regard Man*; not minding *what*, but *whose* the Cause is. It is no such Prize to be in Place and Power to do Mischief; every little Devil has that.

King James the First was told, that the Kings of England are always said to be not only *virtually* (for so they are in all the Courts of *Westminster-Hall*) but *personally* in the *Kings-Bench-Court*; and therefore he (for a Tryal of Skill) would once (and but once) sit *there* on the Bench, and hear Causes.

The

The first Cause (and he staid but to hear one) was *open'd* by the Plaintiffs Council, who (as is usual) laid on Tongue enough to guild a rotten Sign-Post : *O my Sawl Man*, quoth the King, *thou sayest weel, give the honest Man his Cause*. But the Judges perswaded him, to keep *one Ear open* for the Defendant (as the Great *Alexander* is said always to do, though some Judges, perhaps, may forget that piece of Justice too on some occasions I believe,) and with much ado they perswaded the King to adjourn his Sentence till the *Defendants Council* was heard ; and he truly setting the *Tail on another Hog*, affrighted the good King off the Bench, saying, in his *Scotch Dialect*, *Marry, Ise come bere ne mare, Knaves aw, Knaves aw*.

This short *Parenthesis* (in the Character of *Priest-craft*) is chiefly to show, that there other pretty *Crafts* in the World, now in vogue, as well as *Priest-craft*.

I will bid farewell to our dear Brethren, the Lay-Elders of the *Scotch or Geneva* breed, in some of the words of a Famous Mountebank.

*There is a Cheat in all Trades, except Ours;
Our Reign is almost done, the next is yours.*

Some *rash* Heads, I fancy, will be apt to think, that I have, by *this little Book*, *pull'd down Christ Church* all Christendom over ; as also the Churches of *St. Peter* at *Rome*, *St. Paul's* in *England* ; the *Kirk* of *St. Andrew* in *Scotland* ; *St. Patrick* in *Ireland* ; and in short the Church of *All-Saints*, all the World over (*mine own* at *Colchester* into the Bargain. And now, *What shall we do for a Church?* And where is the *only true Church* to be found?

I'll tell you *that*, when I vouchsafe (if ever I condescend to gratify a silly and ungrateful World so much) where the *true Church* of *Christ* is visible, and against which *the Gates of Hell*, that is, the Devil and *Priest-craft* *can never prevail* ; especially if they give me occasion, *to give Air* (to what I have long had in my Head) by writing of

PRIEST-CRAFT

A Second Part.

For, *My fullen Muse does scorn to sing,
(Except she list) to please a King.*

In

In the mean time know that there is no true Church of Christ, but what is visible, holy, and infallible; which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and ground of Truth, the only and infallible Judge of what is Scripture, what Apocryphal, and can never err, never fail, cannot be corrupted with Error, and needs no Inquisition, no Bigot-Magistrate, no Acts of Uniformity, no lying Miracles, no Writs de Heretico Comburendo, nor de Excommunicate Capiendo, nor Scotch Horning, nor Taylors, Hangmen, Sumners, Bumbailiffs, nor French Dragoons to maintain or augment it; nay, it is impossible to maintain or augment it with these Methods, being the only true Christian, Apostolical, Orthodox Church militant here upon Earth. Ay, you'll say, such a Church would be worth the seeing more than all the Churches in Rome at a Jubilee. Well, wipe your Eyes, I'll show it presently, if your Eyes be anointed with Spiritual Eye-salve, that ye may behold and see (what a carnal, worldly, devilish Priest craft-Eye can never see) its Beauty, the very same, and only Beauty that is, or was, or ever will be in Heaven, in God, and in the Church Triumphant; namely, The beauty of Holiness, Love, Mercy, Humility, Compassion, Patience, Forbearance, Truth, Justice, and Righteousness. You'll say, these Beauties are not visible in a bloody Jesuit, a proud Priest or Pope, nor in a high flown Churchman, nor in that rigid, fierce Geneva Brood; and all must grant it to be true. For the only true Orthodox Church Members, are such as have the Holy Ghost, the Comforter that leads them into all Truth, Mercy, Justice, Compassion, Charity, Patience, and Forbearance, Forgiving (not killing) one another for God's sake, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. This gives to all true Christians, the Titles falsely usurp'd by some Princes, and which the Pope bestowed on them for being his Jack Ketches, and Executioners, in Hanging, Imprisoning, and Beheading the Members of Christ, as Enemies to his Priest-craft; namely, of Most Catholick, and Most Christian.

Are you Christians indeed, and hope to be saved thereby? Why then do you not believe our blessed Saviour, when he tells us, That his Kingdom is not of this World, this fighting, bloody, Priest-craft, cheating, mischievous World; you have fought for it, and sought for it all this while in places where it is not to be found. If it were, then would his true Servants fight; but now is his Kingdom not from hence, nor consisting of Pride and Pomp, Blood and Rapine. No, no, The Kingdom of God is within you, in Righteousness, Love, and true Holiness: So that you shall not say, when you come to look for the true infallible Church, lo here at Rome, Geneva, Sweden, or, lo there at St. Andrews, or Germany, and so go together by the Ears, and Murder one another, and cut Throats of all that confess not your Church or Priest-craft Opinions to be most true, and conform thereto; such is the Church of Antichrist, that has, with the Devil and Priest-craft deluded the Earth with Blood and Hypocrisy, a thousand Years last past.

Thus I have shown you a Glimpse of the true, ancient, catholick, and militant Church upon Earth; militant, as waging War with Priest-craft, and Priest-craft with it; Apostolical too, as being built and kept in repair by, perhaps Fishermen, as the Apostles; Carpenters, as our blessed Saviour; some Book-learn'd, as St. Paul; some few Inn-keepers, as Gaius, mine Host; some few Physicians, as St. Luke; and some Slaves, as Philemon. No Debauchees, I am sure, will drink a Health to this true Church of England; he drinks to a true Church Triumphant, which is not to be had on this side Heaven.

F I N I S.

16 JY 60

